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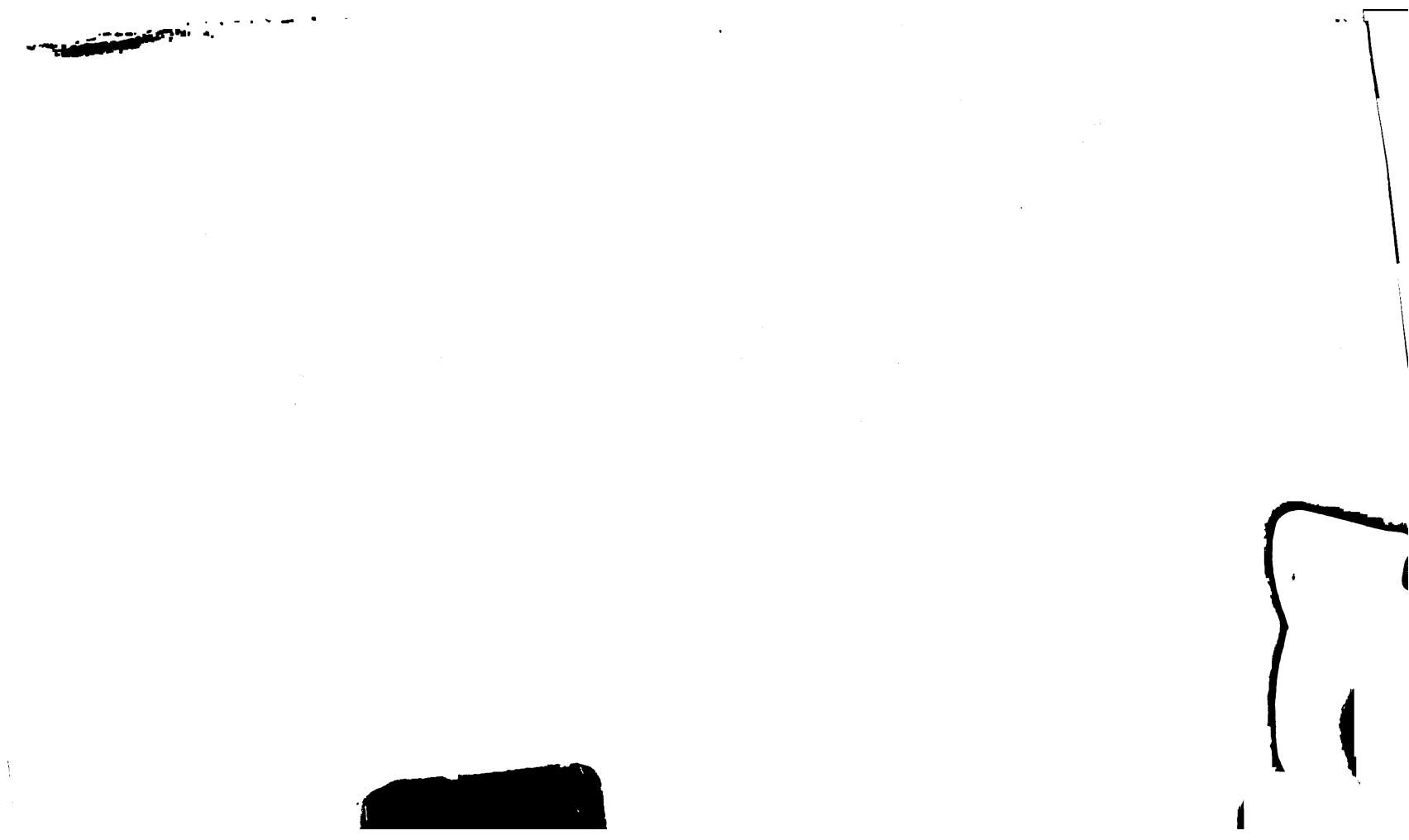

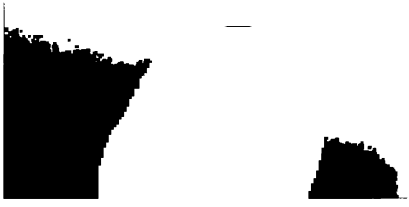

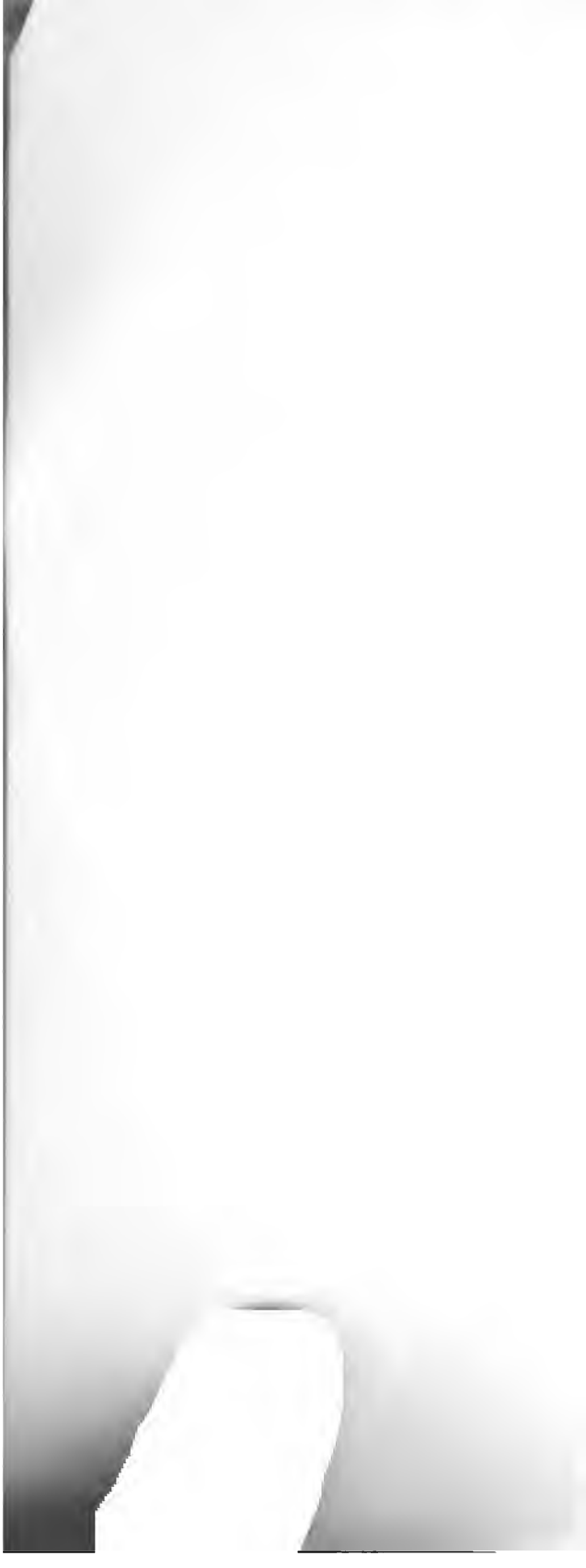

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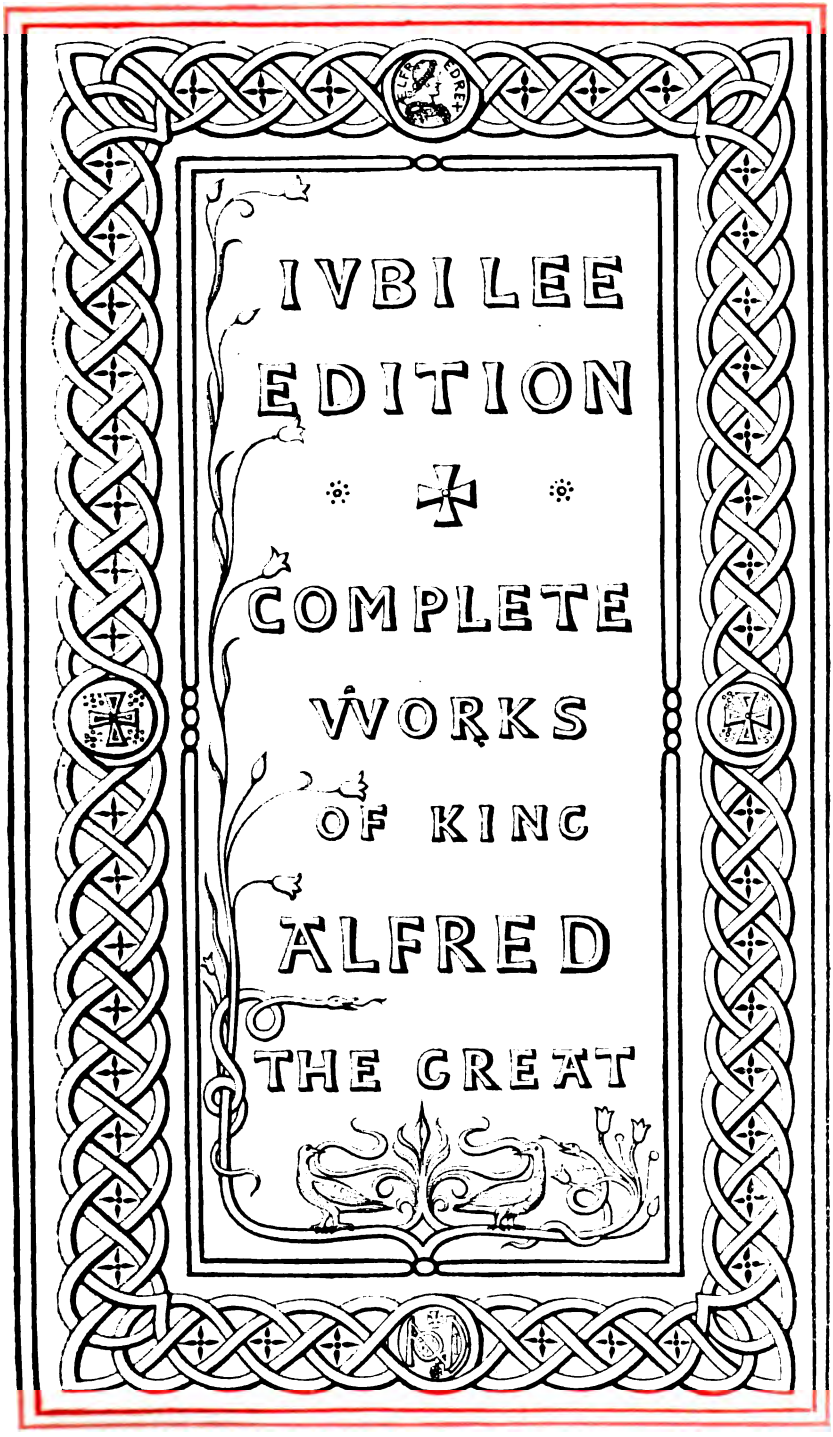
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WITH

PRELIMINARY ESSAYS

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE HISTORY, ARTS, AND MANNERS, OF

THE NINTH CENTURY.

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TO

QUEEN VICTORIA

THE WORKS

OF

HER ILLUSTRIOUS FOREFATHER

King Alfred the Great

ARE RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

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GENERAL TABLE OF CONTENTS.

VOL. I.

Page

Preface ix

I. Harmony of the Chroniclers during the life of King Alfred; A. D. 849—901: by the Rev. Dr Giles xvii

II. Sketch of the Anglo-Saxon Mint; by J. Y. Akerman esq. . . . 129

III. Description of all the coins of King Alfred now remaining; with seven plates, containing fac-similes of all those coins: by the Rev. D. Haigh. 137

IV. A Metrical English Version of King Alfred's Poems; to illustrate Anglo-Saxon Poetry in general: by Martin Farquhar Tupper esq. D. C. L. . 157

V. History and Political State of Europe in the ninth centuary, The Age of King Alfred the Great: by T. Forester esq. 255

VI. Description of King Alfred's Jewel, with some observations on the art of working in gold and silver among the Anglo-Saxons: by the Rev. Dr Giles. 327

VII. The Danes. 1. Their origin. 2. Their warlike deeds and character—4. Their religion—4. Their polity.—5. Their love and mode of war.—6. Their manners customs and occupations—7. Their arts and language: by C. Hook esq. 337

VIII. King Alfred's Charters, translated from the Latin and Anglo-Saxon originals in Kemble's Codex Anglo-Saxonicus: by Dr Giles . . 379

IX. King Alfred's Will: by Dr Giles 399

X. Tabular View of the Decline and Fall of the Heptarchy in the life-time of King Alfred: by Dr Giles 411

XI. Domestic Manners and Habits of the Anglo-Saxons: by G. Soane esq. 413

XII. Traces of the Danes in England: by T. Forester esq. . . 493

XIII. Grimbald's Crypt (with a plate): by Dr Giles. . . . 542

Vol. II.

XIV. An English Translation of King Alfred's Anglo-Saxon Version of the Historian Orosius; with two fac-similes of MSS. : by the Rev Dr Bosworth 9

XV. King Alfred's Version of Venerable Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation; literally translated from the original Anglo-Saxon: by E. Thomson esq. 199

XVI. King Alfred's Anglo-Saxon Version of Boethius, translated into English: by the Rev. S. Fox: with a fac-simile of one of the MSS. 417

Vol. III (*forming the second part of Vol. II*).

XVII. King Alfred's Hand-Book: by Dr Pauli 5

XVIII. An Essay on the Geographv of King Alfred the Great, taken from his Anglo-Saxon Version of Orosius; containing Alfred's Description of Europe in the Ninth Century, and his account of the Voyages of Ohthere and Wulfstan into the White and Baltic seas: by R. T. Hampson esq. 9

XIX. Anglo-Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care: by the late Rev. H. W. Norman 64

XX. A modern English Version of King Alfred's Blossom-Gatherings from Saint Augustine: by E. Thomson esq. 83

XXI. The Laws of King Alfred the Great: by the Rev. Dr Giles . 119

XXII. King Alfred's Preface to the Anglo-Saxon Version of Gregory's Dialogues: by the Rev. S. Fox 140

J. A. GILES, *general editor,*

Perivale Rectory, Harrow, NW: May 1, 1858.

PREFACE.

Two years have now passed since a public meeting was held in the town of Wantage, on the 25th of October 1849, to celebrate the Jubilee or thousandth year since the birth of king Alfred the Great.

At that festival, twenty thousand of our fellow-countrymen were met together, and the whole town presented an appearance of mirth and holiday. A select number of one hundred persons dined together at the Alfred's Head, and their chairman was Charles Eyston esq. of Hendred House, near Wantage, a true English gentleman and both in heart and name a thorough Anglo-Saxon. At that meeting, attended by guests from every part of England, and from America—that hopeful mother of future Anglo-Saxons, as well as from Germany, that ancient cradle of our common race,—surrounded with banners of every hue, with trophies, legends and memorials, it was declared to the world that the name of Alfred, who on that spot first saw the light, should not be forgotten. At that meeting it was resolved:

That a JUBILEE EDITION of the WORKS OF KING ALFRED THE GREAT, *with copious literary, historical, and pictorial illustrations; should be immediately undertaken, to be edited by the most*

competent Anglo-Saxon scholars who might be willing to combine for such a purpose.

This noble design immediately revived the hopes which all English, and indeed all Anglo-Saxon, scholars had so long entertained,—that they might at last see the valuable writings of the great king, whom Old England called her Hero and her Darling, united into one collection, worthy of their author, and of the people who owe to him their arts, arms, and civilization.

It is well known that some of the learned societies, which are engaged in investigating the early history and antiquities of this country, and in publishing the most valuable documents and records of every description, had repeatedly taken into consideration such a plan; that a few of the first and most profound scholars in Saxon history and literature had intended to do the same; and that transcripts of several of Alfred's works had been made by various persons, and were actually almost ready for the press. Owing, however, to various circumstances, which it is unnecessary here to detail, neither societies nor private individuals had been able to carry this design into execution. What, however, public societies and private persons have failed to do, is now on the verge of accomplishment, after the revolution of one of those eras which often inspire mankind to feelings that otherwise would have slumbered.

The Jubilee Edition might have been offered to the public without any preliminary observations whatever; for the works themselves would have told their own story, and sufficiently have indicated the mind of their great author. But, as many of our readers were before, possibly, ignorant even of the fact that King Alfred has left behind him numerous writings in the Saxon or Old English language, it may not be lost time to notice them in this preface with such remarks as may serve to point out the circumstances which give to them their value and render them so interesting to all Englishmen.

The first peculiarity of King Alfred's writings is the remarkable fact that they are all written in the old English language. This circumstance alone places them above both praise and blame. In the ninth century, when all the rest of Europe was dark as night, and the light of the mind seemed on the point of being extinguished among men for ever, there was found, in England, a man

whose soul shone through that thick darkness, and that individual was a king, engaged in a long course of more cruel warfare than the most warlike kings and generals of all former times had ever before accomplished,—and that man had grown to be a boy of twelve years old before he had ever learned to read at all! To praise such a wonderful man is to gild the rainbow or to paint the lily!—to criticise his writings for any other purpose than to admire, would be unjust towards their author, who had no model to copy, no rules to follow, and who was forced, in the intellectual sterility of his age, not to imitate what had gone before, but to carve out models for those who should come after him. Viewed in this light, the works of King Alfred give us a magnificent idea of his superiority over the rest of the world: for he was the inventor, if we may use the expression, of a vernacular literature. His writings are not stored up in the obscurities of monkish Latin, of which it is hard to say whether the trouble of reading it or of writing it is the greater: but they were written in plain English, which the plough-boy, as he whistled his way to the furrow in the neighbourhood of Wantage, might have read with ease, and with profit. And what adds to the merit of these works is the ascertained fact, that the king of England was working alone at that time in pioneering and opening the road to a national literature. All besides himself were grinding in the heavy mill of the Fathers and the Schoolmen, putting forth to the world masses of literary rubbish, which, without doing one atom of good to mankind, swelled the libraries of the monasteries, entailing a load of mental tribulation on posterity for centuries to come.

What, then, is the nature of the writings which employed the pen of a great prince, who was to found the largest and most powerful empire that the world has yet beheld? The reader will see in these volumes what were the writings of the king. They extend to almost every kind of learning then known, or rather, it may be said they reach even beyond the utmost excellence of all contemporary learning. They comprise Poetry, History, Geography, Moral Philosophy, and Legislation; and they form, in fact, the most valuable portion of Anglo-Saxon Literature. It is no disparagement to these writings, that they are mostly paraphrases of ancient Latin authors. This peculiarity was the necessary result of the ignorance in which the whole English nation were then sunk. We may see, in the words of Alfred himself, found in

his own works, the lamentable state of degradation to which the national learning was reduced.

Reason! thou knowest that covetousness and the possession of this earthly power I did not well like, nor strongly desired at all this earthly kingdom, but, oh! I desired materials for the work that I was commanded to do. This was, that I might unfractiously and becomingly steer and rule the power committed to me—What! thou knowest that no man may show any craft or rule, nor steer any power without tools and materials. There are materials for every craft, without which a man cannot work in that craft.

These are the materials of a king's work, and his tools to govern with; THAT HE HAVE HIS LAND FULLY PEOPLED; that he should have his prayermen, and armymen, and workmen. What! thou knowest that without these tools no king may show his skill.

These are also his materials, that with these tools he should have provision for these three classes, and their provision then is, land to inhabit, and gifts, and weapons, and meat, and ale, clothes, and what else that these three classes need; nor can he without these keep his tools; nor without these tools can he work any of those things that it is commanded to him to do.

I wish you to know that it often occurs to my mind to consider, what manner of wise men there were formerly in the English nation, both Spiritual and Temporal, and how happy the times then were among the English, and how the kings, who then had the government of the people, obeyed God and his written will, how well they behaved both in war and peace, and in their domestic government, and how they prospered in knowledge and in wisdom. I considered also how earnest God's ministers then were, as well about preaching as about learning, and about all the service which they did to God, and men came from foreign countries to seek wisdom and doctrine in this land, and how we who live in these times are now obliged to go abroad to get them. To so low a depth has learning fallen among the English nation, that there have been very few on this side of the Humber, who were able to understand the English of their service, or to turn an epistle out of Latin into English; and I know there were not many beyond the Humber who could do it. There were so few, that I CANNOT THINK OF ONE ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE THAMES, WHEN I FIRST BEGAN TO REIGN!

It is now our pleasing task to notice the means to which Alfred had recourse in order to remedy the evil. And here, also, he shall tell in his own words, the designs which his master mind conceived and executed :—

I called to mind [SAYS HE], that the law was first written in the Hebrew tongue, and that, when the Greeks learned it, they translated it into their own language, besides many other books. And after them the Latins, when they learned it, translated it, by means of wise interpreters, into their own language, as all other Christian people, too, have turned some part of it also into their own tongue. For which reason I think it best, if you too think so, that we also

should turn into the language which we all of us know, some such books as are deemed most useful for all men to understand, and that we do our best to effect, as we easily may, with God's help, if we have quietness, that all the youth of free-born Englishmen, such as have wealth enough to maintain them, be brought up to learn, that, at an age when they can do nothing else, they may learn to read the English language then, and that afterwards the Latin tongue shall be taught to those whom they have it in their power to teach and promote to a higher condition.

In pursuance of his noble design, King Alfred, not content to point out, merely, the way to excellence, but eager himself to tread it, with unremitting labour rendered into English numbers of books, which at that time were of the greatest renown in the Latin Literature, and it is a remarkable fact that there are at this moment in existence three of the very copies of Gregory's Pastoral, translated by himself, which, by his orders, were placed in the different cathedral churches for the use of his people.

It is true that the few original compositions of King Alfred, his prefaces and insertions, are but a small part, compared with the whole body of his writings; but they are so intimately connected with the works which they introduce or explain, that it would be impossible to separate them from the places to which they are attached, and to form a distinction between original writings and translations. Besides, whoever has read the latter, must be aware how much original matter they also contain, how freely the king translated, and how many additional ideas are entirely his own. In fact, not one of the works can be called a strict translation; they have all been transformed by Alfred for the particular use of his countrymen and his clergy. This varies, of course, in the different works; by far the most and highly important insertions occur in his Orosius, where is found the famous account of Othere and Wulfstan's travels in the north of Europe, and many more geographical and historical notices in different parts of the book. It is much the same with the translation of Boethius, where, instead of the mythology of the Roman poet, Alfred occasionally inserted that of his own people. In the translation of Bede's ecclesiastical history, on the contrary, we miss now and then some paragraphs, which are found in the original, especially those in which the events of Northumbria are more fully recorded; as the king of the West-Saxons wrote for the southern part of this island, he rejected whatever did not appear to him to be of general

interest. The Pastoral of St Gregory, and the Dialogues of the same pope translated by bishop Werfrith, under the king's especial superintendence, also deviate frequently from their Latin original. In the Jubilee edition of the works, care has been taken to collate the versions with the original Latin authors, and to discriminate, by short notes or otherwise, all the additions and changes made by the royal translator.

As it is not expedient to classify the works of Alfred as original writings and translations, so also is it impossible to arrange them historically, according to the time in which they might have been written. With regard to most of them this point is not at all certain. We only know that Alfred was employed in literary studies during eight or nine years of peace, between the first complete defeat of the Danes under their king Guthrum-Ethelstan in 878, until the time when, after the death of the converted Northman (c. A. 891), the war broke out again. Moreover Asser who became attached to the king not earlier than the year 884, asserts expressly, that Alfred, with his assistance, only then began to translate from the Latin into his native tongue, and that the text of Boethius was prepared and glossed by him for the king's use. It is only the translation of the Pastoral the date of which may be tolerably sure, because Alfred addressed one copy of it to archbishop Plegmund, whose accession to the see of Canterbury, according to the Saxon Chronicle, took place in the year 890. It may be presumed, that this was one of Alfred's last literary labours, as from the year 893 to the end of his life he hardly could have found time for such an occupation; for the dangerous enemy of his country again required his whole attention during that period. About the date of the other works no allusion is to be found.

Here then,—and with little further preface—we launch the Jubilee Edition upon the sea of public opinion, trusting that it will be judged by the standard,—not of the 19th,—but of the 9th century. And yet not so:—we will not lower the remains of the great Alfred by measuring him with so low a standard. Let us rather say that his memory shall yet live another thousand years in those works of the intellect, which he has left as the best legacy behind him,—those works which even now, after the revolution of the

mightiest cycle that mankind can hope to compass, stand out, every now and then, in some noble thought, high above the puny efforts of a world of scribblers, to shew that, of all the many virtues in his composition, the *least* was to have been born a king!

That Alfred was a good king, a great statesman, and a warrior of consummate talents, has been fully proved by a hundred writers who have, directly or indirectly, made him the subject of their praises. His abilities, as an author, have also not escaped notice; but the world requires to be constantly reminded even of the most homely truths. The greatest boons that have been conferred on humanity are speedily forgotten, unless repeatedly brought before the eyes of the existing generation. Virtue, says the poet, is hated by her contemporaries, and, if not suffered to die outright, yet certainly slumbers, until the bosom that harbours her is cold. *Then*, we are told, she rises from her lethargy, and soaring above the reach of apathy, is an object of admiration to every heart and of panegyric to every tongue. But there is a second bourn of forgetfulness, from which few, even the most brilliant of our species, have escaped, and this second wave of oblivion generally overwhelms its victim for ever. What is now actually known of those great heroes whose names still sound—but as little more than empty echoes—on the tongues of our countrymen, or in the pages of our writers? Where are the deeds of King Arthur—of Cymbeline—of Caswallon? Where are the lays and harpings of Merlin, Taliessin, and a crowd of bards, who once excited or controlled the passions of multitudes, and directed them in harmony, as if they were knit into one mass? These have perished, by the law of things, which allows nothing to be everlasting. If then the name and actions of our own Alfred have survived the term which is fatal to the rest of mankind,—if he is still the object of ardent admiration to those who are of kindred blood, and who feel that he was in thoughts and feelings one of themselves, it must surely be the superior brilliancy of his character or of his intellect which has floated him down the stream, where others have been swallowed up, even to the end of the long period of a thousand years.

But, it seems, a new term of life awaits the father of a mighty nation. On the bloody field of victory, where the enemies of England lay slain, Alfred planted the tree of legislation, which has struck a deep root into the fertilized soil, and has long since

put forth leaves and branches. This tree has blossomed and borne fruit—yes! fruit which millions of Englishmen—say rather Anglo-Saxons, in America and Germany, as well as England, will be able to gather and to store up in their own homes, and to say, as they show them to their children, "Here, children, are the "best memorials of a mighty monarch; the legacy, which the "great Alfred bequeathed to his countrymen, more precious than "the jewels which adorn the crown of Victoria, of more worth "than the revenues of kings. Here are contained the burning "words of him, whose life was only long enough to fulfil the work "which was allotted him, who died worn out with the toils of "saving his own generation from ruin, and yet has left these "writings behind him to enlighten all succeeding generations. "These, children, are the WORKS OF KING ALFRED THE GREAT, OF

"Alfred the Englishman!"

ESSAYS

ILLUSTRATIVE OF

ENGLAND AND THE ENGLISH,

IN THE TIME OF KING ALFRED.

I.

HARMONY OF THE CHRONICLERS,

DURING THE LIFE OF KING ALFRED:

A. D. 849—901.

The history of King Alfred's Life and Times is to be gathered from three different classes of written records:

1. Chronicles containing a notice of public and private events during the period in which King Alfred lived; i. e. from the year 849 to the year 901.

2. Incidental notices of those times, found in other writings, such as Homilies, Letters, Councils, Charters &c, whether contemporary or of a later date.

3. The writings of King Alfred himself.

Of King Alfred's own writings, as published collectively, in these volumes, it is unnecessary here to speak.

The second of the three classes of documents, above-mentioned, namely Homilies, Letters, Councils, Charters, and other short pieces, furnishing incidental notices of King Alfred's life and times, have, up to the present time, been only partially collected, and are still in so uncertain a state, being mostly unpublished, and the information which each of them furnishes is so little, that we need

only mention Mr Kemble's collection of charters, "Codex diplomaticus ævi Anglo-Saxonici," and may proceed at once to pass in review the first and principal source from which almost all that we know of the life and history of king Alfred is derived. These are, the regular Chronicles or annals of English history drawn up by monks and ecclesiastics, who lived and wrote between the time of the Reformation and the first introduction of the Christian religion into this island.

These chronicles are valued in proportion as the author was contemporary or not with the events which he records; but in some cases we know so little about the writers that it is impossible for us to determine whether they furnish original evidence or write from second hand. In few cases do we know more about these chroniclers than may be gathered from some brief sentences interspersed in various parts of their works. It is necessary, therefore, to judge each of them on his own merits, and constantly to refer their statements to those tests which criticism supplies, as the best means of eliciting the truth.

The most approved of these methods is certainly to compare one chronicle with another; for if, by this process, all are found to be at variance, we may safely say that no satisfactory inference can be deduced; but if, on the contrary, all agree in the main points of their narratives, it is an obvious result that all are founded upon a ground-work of truth. If any period of English history is of sufficient importance to warrant this laborious comparison of authorities, it is surely the latter half of the ninth century, which coincides with the life of king Alfred the Great; for those fifty years abound in brilliant deeds and stirring events, which have had an influence on the condition of this country, its laws and liberties, even down to the present time.

Notwithstanding the importance of the subject, it is nevertheless a fact, that we do not possess a single ancient chronicle, which can be shewn to be undoubtedly contemporary with the period of which we have now to speak. It is, indeed, generally *believed* that we have one, at least, if not two contemporary histories of this period; but there are certain difficulties connected with one of these, and a want of conclusive evidence respecting the antiquity of the other, which make it necessary to receive both, not perhaps with suspicion, but with that reserve, which, whilst it dignifies every enquiry after truth, not unfrequently leads at last to the

place, where truth may with the greatest certainty be found. These remarks will be more intelligible, as we proceed to examine severally the chronicles which form the basis of English history between the year 849 when Alfred was born at Wantage, and 901, the year of his death.

I. The first of these is generally called the SAXON CHRONICLE, because it is written in the old Saxon tongue, and forms a contiuous record of the old Saxon times. Seven ancient manuscripts of this invaluable document have been preserved, some of which are thought to have been written as early as the ninth century, and therefore to be contemporary with king Alfred. It would far exceed our present limits to give even a superficial account of these manuscripts and the various questions which arise concerning them. The reader may refer, for more minute particulars, to a folio volume "Materials for the History of England, &c." edited by Mr Petrie and published by the Record Commission; to Dr Ingram's edition of the Saxon Chronicle; to the little volume containing a translation of Bede's Ecclesiastical History and of the Saxon Chronicle, published in Mr Bohn's Antiquarian Library; and to a small volume entitled a "Dissection of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle &c. &c." London, 1815.

One observation however must be made, relating to its contemporary character. The gradual variation of style from a more rude to a more modern dialect, so conspicuous throughout the Chronicle, has led to the obvious supposition that it is the gradual work of succeeding ages, the notice of each event having been inserted by the next succeeding chronicler who lived at the time or in the generation immediately succeeding. As applied to the period with which we are now concerned, it is very remarkable that the chronicle does not notice the birth of Alfred in 849, but is highly laudatory of him under 901 the year of his death, and for several preceding years. The inference, which I draw from this fact, is, that the events of 849 and following years were written before Alfred's fame was established, and that those of 901 and the years immediately preceding were written by some contemporary when Alfred's reputation was at its height.

II. ASSER'S LIFE OF ALFRED. The second historical record of this period is a work, professing to be a life of Alfred by Asser, one of his friends and bishops. Its authority, on the one hand, rests upon general tradition; but, on the other hand, has been

questioned on account of certain difficulties, which I shall here briefly mention. 1. It consists of two elements, the one biographical, the other historical. 2. The historical notices are in many places identical in language with the other chronicles of this period, and everywhere correspond most remarkably; as if all had been drawn from some common original. 3. The biographical notices, though interesting, are inserted at random in various parts of the work. The two sides of this complicated question have been severally taken, the one by Mr Wright, who impugns the authenticity of the work in his "Biographia Anglo-Saxonica," page 408, and more fully in a paper read before the Antiquarian Society, and printed in the Archæologia: the other by Dr Lingard, who defends it, in his "History and Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church," vol. ii, page 420. The work does not extend further than the year 893, and the whole of it is given in this Harmony of the Chroniclers.

III. ETHELWERD, surnamed the 'Patrician,' has left a chronicle of England down to the reign of king Edgar, written in the most barbarous and inflated Latin style that can possibly be conceived. He says, in his own work, that he was descended from Ethelred the brother of king Alfred. He lived in the latter half of the eleventh century and therefore was coeval with the Norman Conquest. His work is copied almost wholly from the Saxon Chronicle.

IV. FLORENCE OF WORCESTER, so called from the abbey, in which he was a monk, compiled a chronicle of English history, partly from the Saxon Chronicle, and partly from the work of Marianus Scotus, extending to the year 1118, when its author died. A continuation, by an anonymous author, brings down the history to the year 1141.

V. HENRY OF HUNTINGDON. This writer tells us, in a letter published in Wharton's Anglia Sacra, vol. ii, p. 694, that he was an adherent of Robert Bloet, bishop of Lincoln from A. D. 1092 to 1122. He is surnamed 'of Huntingdon,' because he was archdeacon of Huntingdon; and not from the place of his birth. He died about the middle of the twelfth century. His works consist of his History or Chronicle, and various poems, epigrams and hymns, which were collected by their author before his death, and published in twelve books, part of which only has been printed.

VI. SIMEON OF DURHAM, a monk of Durham, and præcentor of that church, lived about the year 1130, and wrote a Chronicle or Annals of English history from the time of the Saxon Heptarchy down to the year 1129; and for part of this period he wrote a duplicate work, varying in several respects, but principally in phraseology, from the former. There has not yet been any complete edition of the two works.

These six chronicles form the ground work of our authority for the period of English history preceding the times in which their authors lived. In the 'Harmony' their narratives will be arranged in parallel columns; for which mode of treatment, they are admirably adapted by the tabular form of annals into which they were originally thrown by their authors.

There are, however, several other mediæval writers which require to be noticed, because, though mostly later in date, they have added minor facts, which the foregoing principal chroniclers have omitted. These are William of Malmesbury, Ingulf, and the anonymous author of the Chronicle of St Neot's commonly called Asser's Annals.

1. The first of these, WILLIAM OF MALMESBURY, was coeval with some of the six chroniclers before enumerated, as he died in 1140; but the nature of his work, which does not follow the order of chronology, and is not arranged in the form of annals, renders it less adapted for being introduced into a Harmony than those before mentioned. He is the author of a "History of the Kings of England," *De gestis Regum Angliæ*, and "a History of the bishops," *De gestis Pontificum*, besides some works of inferior note.

2. INGULF OF CROYLAND, was secretary to William the Conqueror; he has left us a History of Croyland abbey, which has been continued by an anonymous author, said to be Petrus Blesensis, down to A. D. 1118. Doubts of the authenticity of this work have been entertained by many writers [See WRIGHT'S BIOG. vol. ii, page 29]; but this question cannot be discussed within our present limits.

3. The CHRONICLE OF SAINT NEOT, is sometimes called Asser's Annals, because supposed to have been compiled by the same Asser who wrote the Life of Alfred. This, however, is another of those historical difficulties for the solution or even the investigation of which a separate treatise would be required. The most remarkable feature of the Annals, as regards our present subject,

is their identity in language with the Life of Alfred in at least three-fourths of what they have in common: and a second peculiarity of the Annals is that some passages in Alfred's life, of a vague and uncertain character, seem to rest on their authority alone. They omit some things mentioned in the Life, and elsewhere supply additional matter: they end in the year 914.

Such are principally the works which have been brought together to form this Harmony of the Chroniclers during the life of king Alfred; and the mode in which they are arranged, with every other necessary particular, will be readily understood, with the help of the following observations.

1. The six oldest chroniclers are arranged in six parallel columns, so that the different accounts of the same transaction are found side by side.

2. Variations of fact only, and not of mere language, found in the three subsidiary writers, above described, are inserted in smaller type, as near as may be to the six principal narratives.

3. Notes, illustrations, and occasional extracts from later writers, Matthew of Westminster, Matthew Paris, John Brompton, and others, are also, in like manner, given in a smaller type.

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd	849
	* Asser's Life of Alfred is superscribed thus: TO MY VENERABLE AND MOST PIOUS LORD, RULER OF ALL THE CHRISTIANS IN THE ISLAND OF BRITAIN, TO ÆLFRED, KING OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS, ASSER, THE LAST OF ALL THE SERVANTS OF GOD A THOUSAND-FOLD PROSPERITY IN EITHER LIFE, TO THE FULFILMENT OF HIS WISHES.		
	In the year of our Lord's incarnation 849, was born ÆLFRED, king of the Angul-Saxons, in the royal vill which is called Wanating,* in that district which is called Berrocscire, which district is so called from Berroc Wood, where the box tree grows most abundantly.	* Wantage in Berkshire.	
The Saxon Chronicle does not notice the birth of Alfred, or any other event occurring in 849 and 850. The genealogy, which here follows, is given in connection with the death of Ethelwolf, in the year 855.	His genealogy is traced in the following order.	Ethelwerd, like the Saxon Chronicle, gives the following genealogy in a later year (857).	
And he Æthelwulf was the son of Ecgbreht, Ecgbreht of Ealhmund, Eal-	King Ælfred was the son of king Æthelwolf, who was the son of Ecgberth, who was the son of Ealhmund, who was	The aforesaid king [ETHELWOLF], therefore, was the son of king Ecgbyrht, and his grandfather was Ealhmund,	

4. Words, abbreviated in the manuscripts, are written at length in the Harmony; and the Arabic figures are used, for brevity's sake, instead of the Roman numerals, which are universally found in the manuscripts of the original writers.

5. As the Harmony is intended for historical and not philological purposes, the text of the chronicles is given, not in the original Latin, but in an English literal translation. But the spelling of proper names, both in the Saxon column, which gives a vernacular idiom, and in the other chroniclers, who wrote in Latin, has been carefully retained, except in cases of manifest error.

6. The whole text of the six principal chroniclers between the years 849 and 901 has been given; and, in the same way, the whole of the supplementary chronicles, and all the Charters between the same dates, have been noticed in the Harmony.

7. Wherever, in either of the columns, a paragraph has been displaced for the purpose of juxta-position, small figures, denoting the original order, have been prefixed to each paragraph, or an explanatory note has been attached. By these means the reader may for himself reconstruct the chronicle, in its original state.

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849 **Florence** **Huntingdon** **Simeon**

849.

Alfred, king of the Anglo-Saxons, is born in that district which is named Barrocescire, in the royal vill which is called Wanating, which district is so called from Berroc wood, where the box tree grows most abundantly.
His genealogy is traced in the following order.
King Alfred was the son of king Æthelwulf, who was the son of Ecgbert, who was the son of Alhmund, who was

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 849, arose light out of darkness:

Elfred, king of the English, was born in the royal vill, which is called Wanatinge by the English.

His genealogy is traced in the following order.
King Elfred was the son of king Ethelwlf, who was the son of Egberht, who was the son of Alhmund, who was

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd 849
mund of Eafa, Eafa of Eoppa, Eoppa of Ingild; Ingild was brother of Ine king of the West-Saxons, he who held the kingdom thirty seven winters, and afterwards went to St Peter, and there resigned his life; and they were the sons of Cenred, Cenred of Ceolwald, Ceolwald of Cutha, Cutha of Cuthwine, Cuthwine of Ceaulin, Ceawlin of Cynric, Cynric of Cerdic, Cerdic of Elesa, Elesa of Esla, Esla of Gewis, Gewis of Wig, Wig of Freawine, Freawine of Frithogar, Frithogar of Brond, Brond of Bældæg, Bældæg of Woden, Woden of Frithowald, Frithuwald of Frealaf, Frealaf of Frithuwulf, Frithuwulf of Fin, Fin of Godwulf, Godwulf of Geat,	the son of Eafa, who was the son of Eowwa, who was the son of Ingild,—Ingild, and Ine, ‡ the famous king of the West-Saxons, were two brothers. Ine went to Rome, and there ending this life honourably, entered the heavenly kingdom, to reign there for ever with Christ—Ingild and Ine were the sons of Coenred, who was the son of Ceolwalde, who was the son of Cudam, who was the son of Cuthwine, who was the son of Ceaulin, who was the son of Cynric, who was the son of Creoda, who was the son of Cerdic, who was the son of Elesa, who was the son of Gewis, from whom the Britons name all that nation Gegwis,¶ who was the son of Brond, who was the son of Belde, who was the son of Woden, who was the son of Frithowalde, who was the son of Frealaf, who was the son of Frithuwulf, who was the son of Fin ‖ Godwulf, who was the son of Geat, which Geat the pagans long worshipped as a god.	his great-grandfather Eafa, whose father was Eoppa, and his great-grandfather's grandfather was Ingild, brother of Ine, king of the Western-Angles, who ended his life at Rome; and the above-named kings derived their origin from king Cenred. Cenred was the son of Ceolwald, son of Cuthwine, son of Ceaulin, son of Cynric, son of Cerdic, who also was the first possessor of the western part of Britain, after he had defeated the armies of the Britons: his father was Elesa, son of Esla, son of Geuuis, son of Wig, son of Freauuine, son of Frithogar, son of Brond, son of Balder, son of Uuothen, son of Frithouuald, son of Frealaf, son of Frithouulf, son of Fin, son of Goduulfe, son of Geat,

‡ Or Ina. His memory is still preserved as a "household word," by the verger of Wells cathedral.

¶ Gewissæ, the West-Saxons.

‖ Here are omitted the words 'who was the son of'; for Fin and Godwulf were two distinct persons, father and son. There are many other similar errors in all the six chronicles; but it will be unnecessary to notice them: the parallel columns of the others will, in almost every case, indicate and correct the error.

Sedulius makes mention of him in his metrical poem, as follows:

When gentile poets with their fictions vain
In tragic language and bombastic strain
To their god Geta, comic deity.
Loud praises sing, &c.

Geat of Tætwa, Tætwa of Beaw, Beaw of Sceldwa, Sceldwea	Geata was the son of Cætwa, who was the son of Beaw, who was the son of Sceldwea,	son of Tetuua, son of Beo, son of Scyld, son of Scef. This Scef came with one ship to an island of the ocean named Scani, sheathed in arms, and he was a young boy, and unknown to the people of that land; but he was received by them, and they guarded him as their own with much care, and afterwards chose him for their king. It is from him that king Athulf derives his descent.
of Heremod, Heremod of Itermon, Itermon of Hathra, Hathra of Hwala, Hwala of Bedwig, Bedwig of Sceaf, that is, the son of Noe, he was born in Noe's ark; Lamech, Matusalem, Enoh, Iae-	who was the son of Heremod, who was the son of Itermod, who was the son of Hathra, who was the son of Huala, who was the son of Bedwig, who was the son of Sem, who was the son of Noe, who was the son of Lamech,	

849 **Florence** | **Huntingdon** | **Simeon**

the son of Eafa, who was the son of Eoppa, who was the son of Ingils,—Ingils and Ine, the famous king of the West-Saxons, were two brothers. Ine went to Rome, and there ending this life honourably, entered the heavenly kingdom, to reign there with Christ.—Ingils and Ine were the sons of Coenred, who was the son of Ceolwald, who was the son of Cutha, who was the son of Cuthwin, who was the son of Ceaulin, who was the son of Kenric, who was the son of Creodi, who was the son of Cerdic, who was the son of Elisi, who was the son of Esle, who was the son of Gewis, from whom the Britons name all that nation Gewis, who was the son of Wig, who was the son of Freawine, who was the son of Freodegar, who was the son of Brand, who was the son of Bealdeag, who was the son of Woden, who was the son of Frithewald, who was the son of Frealaf, who was the son of Fritheulf, who was the son of Finn, who was the son of Godulf, who was the son of Gæta, which Gæta the pagans long worshipped as a god.

the son of Affa, who was the son of Eoppa, who was the son of Ingild,—Ingild and Ine were brothers. Ine was the most famous king throughout the borders of all the nation of the English, who royally ruled the kingdoms of the western regions, and, when he had passed several years in his kingdom, went to Rome, leaving his country and present kingdom, that he might possess with Christ an eternal one, which the power of the divine majesty gave to him—These were the sons of Coenred, who was the son of Ceolwold, who was the son of Guda, who was the son of Cuderwine, who was the son of Ceawlin, who was the son of Cinric, who was the son of Creoda, who was the son of Cerdic, who was the son of Elesa, who was the son of Gewis, from whom the Britons name all that nation Gegwis, who was the son of Brand, who was the son of Belde, who was the son of Woden, who was the son of Frithuwald, who was the son of Frealaf, who was the son of Fridrenwulf, who was the son of Geta, whom the pagans long worshipped as a god.

Sedulius, the famous poet, makes mention of him in his Paschal poem, beginning thus:

[vain
When gentile poets with their fictions
In tragic language & bombastic strain
To their god Geta, comic deity,
Loud praises sing &c.

who was the son of Cetwa, who was the son of Beawa, who was the son of Sceldwa,

Geta was the son of Cetwa, who was the son of Beaw, who was the son of Seldwa,

who was the son of Heremod, who was the son of Itermod, who was the son of Hathra, who was the son of Wala, who was the son of Bedwig, who was the son of Seth, who was the son of Noah, who was the son of Lamech, who was the son of Matu-

who was the son of Heremod, who was the son of Itermod, who was the son of Hatra, who was the son of Wala, who was the son of Bedwig, who was the son of Sem, who was the son of Noe, who was the son of Lamech, who was the son of Matusa-

Saxon Chronicle

red, Maleel, Cainon, Enos, Seth, Adam, primus homo et pater noster, id est Christus. Amen.

CHARTERS IN 849. 1. ALHEUN bishop of Worcester. Kemble's Codex, vol. II, p. 33. 2. BERTWOLF, king of Mercia, Ib. p. 34.

Asser

who was the son of Methusalem, who was the son of Enoch, who was the son of Malaleel, who was the son of Cainan, who was the son of Enos, who was the son of Seth, who was the son of Adam.

The mother of Alfred was named Osburgh, a religious woman, noble both by birth and by nature; she was daughter of Oslac, the famous butler of king Æthelwulf, which Oslac was a Goth by nation, descended from the Goths and Jutes, of the seed, namely, of Stuf and Wihtzur, two brothers and counts; who, having received possession of the Isle of Wight from their uncle, king Cerdic, and his son Cynric their cousin, slew the few British inhabitants whom they could find in that island, at a place called Gwihtgaraburhg;* for the other inhabitants of the island had either been slain before, or escaped into exile.

Ethelwerd 849

* The Wihtwara, or in the Latin form, VECTUARII, are the "inhabitants of Wight;" hence "Wihtgaraburg" the "town of the inhabitants of Wight:" its modern name is CARISBROOK. MATTHEW of WESTMINSTER says "Withgaresburgh i. e. burgum Withgari," Withgare's borough.

A. 850.

CHARTERS IN 850. Two of ETHELWOLF king of Wessex. II, 35.

AN. 851. Here alderman Ceorl fought with the heathen men in Devonshire at Wicganbeorge [WEMBURY,] and there made great slaughter, and gained the victory.

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 851, which was the third after the birth of king Alfred, Ceorl, earl of Devon, with the men of Devon fought against the pagans at a place called Wicgambeorg; and the Christians gained the victory.

When seven years, then, had passed, Ceorl earl of Devon engages in battle against the pagans at a place called Uuiganbeorge; and they slay many of the Danes, and keep possession of the place of victory.

2 And the heathen men first sat over winter in Thanet.

And that same year the pagans first wintered in the island called Sheppey, which means the Sheep-isle, and is situated in the river Thames between Essex and Kent, but is nearer to Kent than to Essex; it has in it a fine monastery [MINSTER].

2 But in the course of that year the barbarians first wintered in the island of Thanet, which lies not far from Britain, and has fruitful but not large cornfields.

851 **Florence** **Huntingdon** **Simeon**

salem, who was the son of Enoch, who was the son of Jared, who was the son of Malaliel, who was the son of Cainan, who was the son of Enos, who was the son of Seth, who was the son of Adam.

The mother of Alfred was named Osburga, a religious woman, noble both by birth and by nature; she was daughter of Oslac, the famous butler of king Ætheluulf, which Oslac was a Goth by nation, descended from the Goths and Jutes, of the seed, namely, of Stuf and Wihtgar, two brothers and counts, who, having received possession of the Isle of Wight from their uncle, king Cerdic, and his son Cynric their cousin, slew the few British inhabitants whom they could find in that island, at a place called Wihtgarabirig; for the other inhabitants of the island had either been slain before, or escaped into exile.

lem, who was the son of Enoch, who was the son of Malaleel, who was the son of Canaan, who was the son of Enos, who was the son of Seth, who was the son of Adam the first man.

But the mother of king Elfred was called Osburg; she was a very religious woman and noble in disposition, which nobility she adorned with prudence of mind. Her father also was called Oslac; he was the devoted and faithful butler of king Ethelwlf. For he was sprung from the Goths and the Jutes, of the seed of Stuph and Wihtgar, two brothers.

Having premised these things, let us now, as far as we can, pursue the course of the work, which we have undertaken.

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850. On the calends of June [June 1], the eve of Whitsunday, Berhtferth, son of Berhtulf king of the Mercians, unjustly slew his relation St Wistan. Now this man was the grandson of two Mercian kings: for his father Wigmund was son of king Wiglaf, but his mother Ælfleda was daughter of king Ceoluulf. But his body, being borne to the monastery at that time so famous, named Reopedun [Repton], was buried in the mausoleum of his grandfather king Wiglaf. To his martyrdom heavenly miracles were not wanting: for from the place in which the innocent youth was slain, a column of light, stretching up to heaven, was visible for 30 days to all the neighbours of that place.

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851. Ceorl earl of Devon, with the men of Devon, fought against the pagans at a place called Wicganbeorh; and the Christians gained the victory.

5 The consul also named Ceorl, with the people of Devonshire, fought against the pagans, and slew many, and was victorious at Wienorne.

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 851 and the third from the birth of Alfred, earl Ceorl fought against the Danes, and the Christians gained the victory over their enemies.

And that same year the pagans first wintered in the island called Sheppey, which means the Sheep-isle, and is situated on the river Thames between Essex and Kent, but is nearer to Kent than to Essex; it has in it a fine monastery.

7 This year the army of the pagans first stopped through the whole winter in this country.

The Danes also wintered in the island which is called Sheppey, i. e. Sheep-island.

Saxon Chronicle

3 And the same year came three hundred and fifty ships to Thames-mouth, and the crews landed and broke into Canterbury and London, and put to flight Beorhtwulf king of the Mercians with his army.

§ Canterbury was called DORUBERNIA, i. e. DOVER, in the earlier part of the Saxon History.

4 And then went south over the Thames into Surrey; and there king Æthelwulf and his son Æthelbald, with the army of the West-Saxons, fought against them at Aclea [OCKLEY], and there made the greatest slaughter among the heathen army that we have heard tell of unto the present day‖, and there got the victory.

‖ This must, apparently, have been written before the terrible battles which Alfred afterwards fought against the Danes at Ashdown, and Eddington.

CHARTERS IN 851. 1. BERTWOLF king of Mercia, Friday, March 27. II, 36. 2. Another of BERTWOLF, II, 45.

¶ The Annals have "Athelstan son of King Adhelwlf." He was king of the eastern subject kingdom of Kent, Essex, and Sussex. Some call him brother of Ethelwolf.

1 And the same year king Æthelstan ¶ and alderman Ealchere fought on shipboard, and cut off a large army at Sandwich in Kent, and took nine ships, and put the others to flight.

Asser

The same year also a great army of the pagans came with three hundred and fifty ships to the mouth of the river Thames, and sacked Dorubernia, § which is the city of the Cantuarians, [and also the city of London, *] which lies on the north bank of the river Thames, on the confines of Essex and Middlesex; but yet that city belongs in truth to Essex; and they put to flight Beorhtulf, king of Mercia, with all the army, which he had led out to oppose them.

After these things, the same army of pagans went into Surrey, which is a district situated on the south bank of the river Thames, and to the west of Kent. And Æthelwulf, king of the Saxons, and his son Æthelbald, with all their army, fought a long time against them at a place called Ac-lea, i. e. the Oak-plain, and there, after a lengthened battle, which was fought with much bravery on both sides, the greater part of the pagan multitude was destroyed and cut to pieces, so that we never heard of their being so slaughtered, either before or since, in any country, in one day; and the Christians gained an honourable victory, and were triumphant over the place of death.

In the same year king Æthelstan and earl Ealhere slew a large army of the pagans in Kent, at a place called Sandwich, and took nine ships of their fleet; the others escaped by flight.

Ethelwerd 851

3 That year was not yet finished, when a large fleet of pagans came, with 350 ships, to the mouth of the river Thames, commonly called Thames-mouth, and destroyed the city of Canterbury and the city of London, and put to flight Beornulf king of Mercia, having defeated his army.

* The words in brackets do not occur in Asser, but it is evident that they have been omitted by the copyist; for the descriptive words WHICH LIES ON THE NORTH BANK &c. cannot apply to Canterbury.

4 After the battle they returned beyond the river Thames towards the south, through the province of Surrey, and there king Athulf with the Western Angles met them: an immense number was slain on both sides, nor have we ever heard of a more severe battle before that day: these things happened near Aclea Wood.

ANNALS. 851. The Normans enter the Seine.

INGULF states that there was a severe disease in 851, prevalent over all England, which withered the limbs of men, women, and children, and was similar to the palsy.

1 Also in the same year king Æthelstan and duke Ealhere fought against the army of the above-mentioned nation in the province of Kent, near the town of Sandwich, where they slew many of them, put their troops to flight, and took nine ships,

Florence

The same year also a great army of the pagans came with three hundred and fifty ships to the mouth of the river Thames, and sacked Dorubernia, which is the city of the Cantuarians, and also the city of London, which lies on the north bank of the river Thames, on the confines of Essex and Middlesex; but yet that city belongs in truth to Essex; and they put to flight Beorhtwulf king of Mercia with all his army, which he had led out to oppose them.

After these things, the same army of pagans went into Surrey, which is a district situated on the south bank of the river Thames, and to the west of Kent. And Æthelulf, king of the West-Saxons, and his son Æthelbald, with all their army, fought a long time against them at a place called Ac-lea, i. e. the Oak-plain, and there, after a fierce battle, which was fought with much bravery on both sides, the greater part of the pagan multitude was destroyed and cut to pieces, so that we never heard of their being so slaughtered, either before or since, in any country, in one day; and the Christians gained an honourable victory, and were triumphant over the place of death.

In the same year king Æthelstan and earl Ealhere slew a large army of the pagans in Kent, at a place called Sandwich, and took nine ships of

Huntingdon

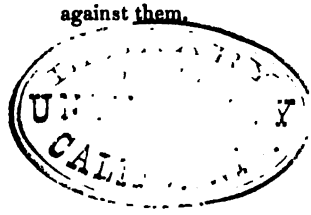
1 Adelwlf, in the 16th year of his reign, and Edelbald his son, having assembled all their forces, fought with a great army, which with 250 ships had put in at Thames-mouth and overpowered those illustrious cities, famous through so many years, namely London, and Canterbury, and defeated and put to flight Britwlf king of Mercia, with his army, who never afterwards throve again;

3 And entering Surrey, they met the royal squadrons at Achlea. There was fought, therefore, between those large armies so great and so severe a battle, as no one before had ever heard to have been fought in England. You might then have seen warrior men fall on both sides like a crop of corn, and streams of blood roll with them the heads and limbs of the slain. But would it not be too great and wearying prolixity to describe each particular? God gave the fortune of the battle to those who believed in him, and unutterable anguish to those who despised him. King Adelwlf then was the glorious victor.

4 The same year Edelstan, king of Kent, and duke Ealhere, fought a naval battle against the Danes at Sandwich, and having made a great slaughter of the enemy,

Simeon

In the same year a great army of pagans came with 350 ships into the mouth of the river Thames. Who laid waste Dorobernia, i.e. the city of the Kentish men, and put to flight Berhtulf king of the Mercians with all his army, who had come to do battle against them.



After this the Danes became more bold, and all their army was drawn together in Surrey. Which the warlike Ethelwlf king of the Saxons hearing, both he and his son Ethelbald with him collected a large army in a place which is called Aclea, that is, in the field of the oak. And when the pride of the English nation shone with glancing arms, the English fought a very long time with the Danes; bravely striving against them, because they saw that their king fought fiercely, therefore they became braver than their enemies in war. And when they had manfully striven for a very long time, and both sides fought with much sharpness and spirit, the greatest part of the Pagan throng was thoroughly cut off and slain, so that never in any land, in one day, before or after, did so many fall. The Christians however on that same day honourably gained the victory and were masters of the field of death, giving thanks to the Lord in hymns and confessions.

* King Ethelstan and earl Alchere found a great army of the pagans in Kent in a place which is called At Sandwich; † whom

* Simeon prefixes Anno Dominicæ Incarnationis 852 to this paragraph, but the other chroniclers are against him.

† At Sandwich: a customary Saxon idiom.

Saxon Chronicle | Asser | Ethelwerd

A. 852. Here at this time Ceolred abbat of Medeshamstede and the monks let to Wulfred the land of Sempingaham, on this condition, that after his decease the land should return to the minster, and that Wulfred should give the land of Sliowaford [Sleaford] to Medeshamstede, and each year should deliver into the minster sixty fother of wood, and twelve fother of coal, and six fother of faggots, and two tuns full of pure ale, and two beasts fit for slaughter, and six hundred loaves, and ten measures of Welsh ale, and each year a horse, and thirty shillings, and one day's entertainment. At this agreement were present king Burhred, and archbishop Ceolred, and bishop Tunberht, and bishop Cenred and bishop Alhhun, and bishop Berhtred, and abbat Wihtred, and abbat Werhtherd, and alderman Æthelheard and alderman Hunberht, and many others.

* This local notice of Medeshamstead, i. e. Peterborough, occurs in only one MS. of the Saxon Chronicle, which was probably written by a monk of that abbey.

CHARTERS in 852. 1. Ceolred abbat of Peterborough, subscribed by Burgred king of Mercia &c. II, 46. This Charter is partly the same as the extract from the Saxon Chronicle under this year. 2. Bertwolf king of Mercia, II, 47.

A. 853. Here Burhred king of the Mercians and his 'witan' begged of king Æthelwulf that he would assist him so that he might make the North-Welsh obedient to him.

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 853, which was the fifth of king Alfred, Burgred, king of the Mercians, sent messengers, and prayed Æthelwulf king of the West-Saxons, to come and help him in reducing the midland Britons, who dwell between Mercia and the western sea, and who struggled against him most immoderately.

After three years king Burhred asked assistance from king Æthelwulf to subdue the Northern Britons.

He then did so; and went with an army across Mercia among the North-Welsh, and made them all obedient to him.

So without delay, king Æthelwulf, having received the embassy, moved his army, and advanced with king Burghred against Britain, and immediately on entering that country, he began to ravage it; and having reduced it under subjection to king Burghred, he returned home.

He granted it, and having collected his army, passed through the Mercian kingdom to go against the Britons: whom he subdued and made tributary.

3 And upon this after Easter Æthelwulf king of the West-Saxons gave his daughter * to Burgred king of Mercia.

* Her name was Ethelswith.

4 In the same year also, after Easter, Æthelwulf, king of the West-Saxons, gave his daughter to Burgred, king of the Mercians, to be queen, and the marriage was celebrated royally at the royal vill of Chippenham.

3 The same year also after Easter king Athulf gave his daughter in marriage to king Burhrede.

853 Florence	Huntingdon	Simeon
heir fleet; the others escaped by flight.	took nine of their ships; but the others fled.	they almost cut off in the same place, God granting them help, and seized nine of their ships: the rest struck with terror escaped by flight.
	6 This year, therefore, was fortunate for the English people.	
852. Beorhtuulf, king of the Mercians, departed this life, to whom Burhred succeeded in the kingdom.	2 To whom [BERTWOLF] succeeded Burrhed on the throne of Mercia.	
853. Burhred, king of the Mercians, by messengers, prayed Æthelwulf king of the West-Saxons, to come and help him in reducing the midland Britons, who dwell between Mercia and the western sea, and who struggled against him most immoderately.	Adelwlf, in the 18th year of his reign, most powerfully helped Burhred to subdue under his rule the North Welsh.	In the year of our Lord's incarnation 853, of the birth of Alfred 5, Burhred king of the Mercians sent messengers, and begged Ethelwlf king of the West Saxons to bring him help in order that he might be able to subdue under his dominion the midland Britons who dwell between Mercia and the Western Sea, who often strove against him.
So without delay, king Æthelwulf, having received the embassy, moved his army, and advanced with king Burhred against Britain, and immediately on entering that country, he began to ravage it; and having reduced it under subjection to king Burhred, he returned home.	CHARTERS IN 853. ETHELWOLF king of Wessex, subscribed by ETHELBERTUS rex, CIALNOTHUS Dei gratia archiepiscopus, and others, among whom we find "Ego ELFARD fili regis consensi et subscripsi." II, 48. MATTHEW OF WESTMINSTER relates, under this year, a legend concerning the terrible death and damnation of a witch; also the fate of Charles Martel.	But King Ethelwlf, having received his embassy, moved an army, distributed pay, and bravely went forth with king Burhred to war. Presently when he had begun to lay waste that nation, he took, slew, and subdued it to king Burhred, who giving thanks sent him away with joy to return to his own land.
3 In the same year also, after Easter, Æthelwulf, king of the West-Saxons, gave his daughter to Burhred, king of the Mercians, and the marriage was celebrated royally at the royal vill of Chippenham.	And gave him his daughter in marriage.	3 The same year after the feast of Christ's holy resurrection, king Ethelwlf, of glorious power, gave his daughter, with great glory, as it is customary for kings, to Burhred king of the Mercians, at the vill which is called At Chippenham;

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd 85
1 And the same year king Æthelwulf sent his son Ælfred to Rome. Leo was then pope of Rome, and he consecrated him king, and took him for his son at confirmation. *	1 In the same year, king Æthelwulf sent his son Ælfred, above-named, to Rome, with an honourable escort both of nobles and commoners. Pope Leo [THE FOURTH] at that time presided over the apostolic see, who ordained and anointed for king the aforesaid child Ælfred, and confirmed him, receiving him as his son of adoption.	1 In the same year king Atheluulf sent his son Ælfred to Rome in the days of our lord pope Leo, who consecrated him king and named him his son in baptism, as we are accustomed to name little children, when we receive them from the bishop's hand.
* See note * in page 18.		
2 Then, in the same year, Ealhere, with the men of Kent, and Huda, with the men of Surrey, fought in Thanet against the heathen army; and at first they were victorious; and many there were slain, and drowned on either hand, and both the alderman were killed.	2 The same year also, earl Ealhere, with the men of Kent, and Huda with the men of Surrey, fought bravely and resolutely against an army of the pagans, in the island, which is called in the Saxon tongue, Tenet, [THANET], but Ruim in British. 3 And at first the Christians had the victory, but when the battle was protracted to a great length, many fell on both sides, and also were drowned in the water; and both the earls were there slain.	2 In the same year were fought battles in the isle of Thanet against the pagans; and there was a great slaughter made on both sides, and many were drowned in the sea.

A. 854.

CHARTERS IN 854. 1. ETHELWOLF, king of Wessex, subscribed also by Alstan, "Æthred filii. reg." and "Ælfred fili. reg." II, 50. This is the celebrated grant of tithes: it is dated April 22. 2. Another copy of the same charter follows, p. 52, in which the names of Ethelred and Alfred do not appear. Both copies bear the subscription of the celebrated Swithun bishop of Winchester, and Alstan bishop of Sherborne. 3 ETHELWOLF, April 23. 4. "ETHELWOLF, subscribed also by "ÆTHELRED filius regis," and "ÆLFRED filius regis," II, 55. 5. BERTWOLF of Mercia, no date, II, 56.

A. 855. Here the heathen men first sat over winter in Sheppey.	In the year of our Lord's incarnation 855, which was the seventh after the birth of the aforesaid king, the great army of the pagans passed the whole winter in the aforesaid isle of Sheppey.	After a year the pagans wintered in Sheppey.
And the same year king Æthelwulf gave by charter the tenth part of his land throughout his realm for the glory of God and his own eternal salvation.	In the same year the aforesaid venerable king Æthelwulf released the tenth part of all his kingdom from all royal service and tribute, and with a pen never to be forgotten, offered it up to God the One and the Three in One, in the cross of Christ, for the redemption of his own soul and of his predecessors.	In the same year king Athulf gave the tenth of all his possessions to be the Lord's portion, and so appointed it to be in all the government of his kingdom.

INGULF places the grant of tithes in 855, after the return of Ethelwolf from Rome: but, if he started for Rome in 855, and stayed there 12 months, it is certain that he returned in 856, and consequently, if the grant was made in 855, it must have been made before he started. Ethelwolf married Judith on the 1st of October 856. [BOUQUET, vii, 72]

855

Florence

1 In the same year, king Ætheluulf sent his son Ælfred, above-named, to Rome, with an honourable escort both of nobles and commoners. Whom pope Leo, at his father's request, ordained and anointed for king, and confirmed, receiving him as his son of adoption.

2 The same year also, earl Ealhere, with the men of Kent, and Huda with the men of Surrey, fought bravely and resolutely against an army of the pagans, in the island, which is called in the Saxon tongue, Tenet, [THANET], but Ruim in the British. And at first the Christians had the victory, but when the battle was protracted to a great length, many fell on both sides, and also were drowned in the water; and both .the earls were there slain.

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854. Died Eanbert bishop of Lindisfarne, and Eardulf succeeded.

855

The great army of the pagans passed the whole winter in the aforesaid isle of Sheppey.

In the same year the aforesaid venerable king Ætheluulf released the tenth part of all his kingdom from all royal service and tribute, and with a pen never to be forgotten, offered it up to God the One and the Three in One, in the cross of Christ, for the redemption of his own soul and of his predecessors.

Huntingdon

In the same year king Adelwlf sent to Rome, to pope Leo, his son Alured, whom Leo afterwards blessed as king, and received as his son.

In this year duke Ealhere with the men of Kent and Huda with the men of Surrey, fought against the army of the pagans at Thanet; and a great number were slain on both sides and shipwrecked; and both the dukes died.

* The word here rendered DUKE, is DUX in the Latin: it is rendered DUKE merely for the sake of convenience: the word implies no specific title of honour.

MATT. WESTMINSTER. In the year of Grace 854 died WYMUND archbishop of York to whom succeeded WILFER.

7 About this time the pagans tarried the whole winter in Sheppey.

1 Ethelwolf, in the 19th year of his reign, tithed all his land for the service of the churches, on account of his love of God and for the redemption of himself.

Simeon

whereby, on the completion of the nuptials, he appointed her the dignity of the name of queen.

1 In the same year king Ethelwlf sent over to Rome his son Elfred accompanied by a great band of noble soldiers. At which time the blessed pope Leo presided over the apostolic see: who ordained and anointed for king the aforesaid child, and receiving him for his adopted son, confirmed him and sent him back to his country and to his father with the blessing of St Peter the apostle.

2 At that time earl Alchere and Wada, with the men of Kent and Surrey, fought severely against the army of the pagans in the island which is called TENED in the Saxon tongue, but in the British RUIM. At first the Christians had the victory; but, when the battle was protracted to a great length, many fell on both sides, and many were drowned in the river and slain, a number not to be described. Both the aforesaid leaders there fell for the deliverance of their people.

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 854, archbishop Wlfere received the pall, and Eardulf undertook the bishopric of Lindisfarne.

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 855, and the seventh from the birth of the aforesaid king, the army of the pagans wintered the whole winter in the island of Sheppey.

At which time king Ethelwlf tithed all the dominions of his kingdom for the redemption of his soul and that of his ancestors.

ANNALS. AN. 855. Eadmund, the most glorious king of the East-Angles, begins to reign on the 8th before the calends of January, i. e. on our Lord's birth-day, in the 14th year of his age.

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd 855
And the same year he went to Rome in great state, and dwelt there twelve months.*	In the same year he went to Rome with much honour; and taking with him his son, the aforesaid king Alfred, for a second journey thither, because he loved him more than his other sons, he remained there a whole year.	And in the same year he set out to Rome with great dignity, and stopped there 12 months.

* One MS. of the Chron. gives, as paragraph 7 (in page 26) the following.

7 "Alfred his third son he had sent to Rome: and when pope Leo heard say that Æthelwulf was dead, he consecrated Alured king, and held him as his spiritual son at confirmation, even as his father Athewulf bade on sending him thither.

The general authority of the Saxon Chronicle leads to a doubt, whether Alfred may not have remained at Rome during the interval between the two sendings.

CHARTERS IN 855. 1. ETHELWOLF, Nov. 5. mentions that Beorred king of Mercia, and Edmund king of the Eastangles, were present and subscribed. II, 56. 2. ETHELWOLF; subscribed also by "Æthelberht rex," "Ælfred filius regis," and others. II, 58. 3. BURGRED of Mercia; signed also by "Æthelswith regina," "Mucel dux," and others. II, 58. 4. BURGRED, subscribed also by "Æthelswith regina," and others. II, 60. 5. EALHWINE bishop of Worcester. II, 61.

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(8) A. 856.

1 And then returned homewards. And then Charles king of the Franks gave him his daughter to wife; and after that he came to his people, and they were glad of it.

After which he returned to his own country, bringing with him Judith, daughter of Charles, the king of the Franks.

On his way back to his own country, Charles king of the Franks gave to him in marriage his daughter, whom he received and brought into his own country.

In the meantime, however, whilst king Æthelwulf was residing beyond the sea, a base deed was done, repugnant to the morals of all Christians, in the western part of Selwood. For king Æthelbald and Ealhstan, bishop of the church of Sherborne, with Eanwulf, earl of the district of Somerton,† are said to have made a conspiracy together, that king Æthelwulf, on his return from Rome, should never again be received into his kingdom. This crime, unheard-of in all previous ages, is ascribed by many to the bishop and earl alone, as resulting from their counsels. Many also ascribe it solely to the insolence of the king, because that king was pertinacious in this matter, and in many other perversities, as we have heard related by certain persons; as also was

† Earl of Somersetshire, of which Somerton was once the chief town.

856 **Florence**

And thus he went to Rome with much honour; and taking with him his son, the aforesaid king Alfred, for a second journey thither, because he loved him more than his other sons, he remained there a whole year.

Huntingdon

2 Afterwards he went with great honour to Rome, and there dwelt one year.

Simeon

In the same year, he set out with great honour to the threshold of the prince of the apostles, having with him Elfred, because he loved him more than the others. The king of the English was received in a becoming way by the apostolic man; and he remained there a whole year, diligently occupied in prayers and alms.

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(15) 856.

1 After which he returned to his own country, bringing with him Juthith, daughter of Charles, the king of the Franks.

3 And returning thence, he took to wife the daughter of Charles the Bald king of France, and brought her with him into this country.

When he [ETHELWOLF] was returning to his ountry,

The most holy Edmund, beloved by God, sprung from the lineage of the old Saxons, and a true worshipper of the Christian faith, affable to all by his sweet mode of speech, and deeply imbued with the grace of humility, liberal to the needy, and a most merciful father to orphans and widows, obtained the government of the province of East-Anglia.

ANNALS. AN. 856. In the 18th year of the reign of Adhelwlf king of the West-Saxons, HUMBERCHT bishop of the East Angles anointed with oil, and consecrated for king, the most glorious Eadmund with great joy and the greatest honour, in the royal vill which is called Burna, because the royal seat was then there, in the 15th year of his age, the sixth day of the week, 24th moon, being the day of our Lord's birth.

2 In the meantime, however, whilst king Æthelwulf was residing beyond the sea, a base deed was done, repugnant to the morals of all Christians, in the western part of Selwood. For king Æthelbald and Ealhstan, bishop of the church of Sherborne, with Eanwulf, earl of the district of Somerton, are said to have made a conspiracy together, that king Æthelwulf, on his return from Rome, should never again be received into his kingdom. This crime, unheard-of in all previous ages, is ascribed by many to the bishop and earl alone, as resulting from their counsels. Many also ascribed it solely to the insolence of the king, because that king was pertinacious in this matter, and in many other perversities, as we have heard related by certain persons; as also was

he became hateful to his son Ethelbald, and Ealhstan bishop of Sherborne, and many others.

CHARTERS IN 856. None are extant.

proved by the result of that which follows.

For, as he was returning from Rome, his son aforesaid, with all his counsellors, or, as I ought to say, his conspirators, attempted to perpetrate the crime of repulsing the king from his own kingdom; but neither did God permit the deed, nor would the nobles of Saxony * consent to it. For to prevent this irremediable evil to Saxony, of a son warring against his father, or rather of the whole nation carrying on civil war, either on the side of the one or the other, the extraordinary mildness of the father, seconded by the consent of all the nobles, divided between the two the kingdom which had hitherto been undivided; the eastern parts were given to the father, and the western to the son; contrariwise: for where the father ought by just right to reign, there his unjust and obstinate son did reign; for the western part of Saxony is always preferable to the eastern.

* i. e. ENGLAND.

When Æthelwulf, therefore, was coming from Rome, that nation, as was fitting, so delighted in the arrival of the old man, that, if he permitted them, they would have expelled his rebellious son Æthelbald, with all his counsellors, out of the kingdom. But he, as we have said, acting with great clemency and prudent counsel, so wished things to be done, that the kingdom might not come into danger; and he placed Judith, daughter of king Charles, whom he had received from her father, by his own side on the regal throne, without any controversy or enmity from his nobles, even to the end of his life, contrary to the perverse custom of that nation. For the nation of the West-Saxons do not allow a queen to sit beside the king, nor to be called a queen, but only the king's wife; which stigma the elders of that land say arose from a certain obstinate and malevolent queen of the same nation, who did all things so contrary to her lord, and to all the people, that she not only earned for herself exclusion from the royal seat, but also entailed the same stigma upon those who came after her; for, in consequence of the wickedness of that queen, all the nobles of that land swore together, that they would never let any king reign over them, who should attempt to place a queen on the throne by his side.

And because, as I think, it is not known to many whence this perverse and detestable custom arose in Saxony, contrary to the custom of all the Theotiscan † nations, it seems to me right to explain a little more fully what I have heard from my lord Alfred, king of the Anglo-Saxons, as he also had heard it from many men of truth, who in great part recorded that fact.

† "I Tedeschi"—Teutonic.

There was in Mercia, in recent times, a certain valiant king, who was feared by all the kings and neighbouring states around. His name was Offa, and it was he who had the great rampart made from sea to sea between Britain ‡ and Mercia. His daughter, named Eadburgh, was married to Berhtric, king of the West-Saxons; who immediately, having the king's affections, and the control of almost all the kingdom, began to live tyrannically like her father, and to execrate every man whom Beorhtric loved, and to do all things hateful to God and man, and to accuse all she could before the king, and so to deprive them insidiously of their life or power; and if she could not obtain the king's consent, she used to take them off by poison: as is ascertained to have been the case with a certain young man beloved by the king, whom she poisoned, finding that the king would not listen to any accusation against him. It is said, moreover,

‡ i. e. WALES.

856 Florence Huntingdon Simeon

proved by the result of that which follows.

3 For as he was returning from Rome, his son aforesaid, with all his counsellors, or, as I ought to say, his conspirators, attempted to perpetrate the crime of repulsing the king from his own kingdom; but neither did God permit the deed, nor would the nobles of all Saxony consent to it. For to prevent this irremediable evil to Saxony, of a son warring against his father, or rather of the whole nation carrying on civil war, either on the side of the one or the other, the extraordinary mildness of the father, seconded by the consent of all the nobles, divided between the two the kingdom which had hitherto been undivided; the eastern parts were given to the father, and the western to the son;

for where the father ought by just right to reign, there his unjust and obstinate son did reign; for the western part of Saxony is always preferable to the eastern.

4 When Æthelwulf, therefore, was coming from Rome, that nation, as was fitting, so delighted in the arrival of the old man, that if he permitted them, they would have expelled his rebellious son Æthelbald, with all his counsellors, out of the kingdom. But he, as we have said, acting with great clemency and prudent counsel, so wished things to be done, that the kingdom might not come into danger; and he placed Judith, daughter of king Charles, whom he had received from her father, by his own side on the regal throne, without any controversy or enmity from his nobles, even to the end of his life, contrary to the perverse custom of that nation. For the nation of the West Saxons do not allow a queen to sit beside the king, nor to be called a queen, but only the king's wife; which stigma our elders say arose from a certain obstinate and malevolent queen of the same nation.

6 For the malice of this queen, all the inhabitants of that land swore together, that they would never allow any king to reign over them, who should command his queen to sit beside him on the royal throne.

* The remarks which William of Malmesbury has made on the reign and character of Ethelwolf are worthy of notice: "In the year of our Lord's incarnation 537, Ethelwulf, (whom some call Athulf) son of

[Go to the top of the next column.]

5 There was in Mercia, in recent times, a certain valiant king, Offa, whose daughter, named Eadburh, was married, as we have said before, to Brihtric, king of the West-Saxons; who immediately began to live tyrannically and to do all things hateful to God and man, and to accuse all she could before the king, and so to deprive them insidiously of their life or power; and if she could not obtain the king's consent she used to take them off by poison: as is ascertained to have been the case with a certain young man beloved by the king, whom she poisoned, finding that the king would not listen to any accusation against him. It is said, moreover,

Egbirht, reigned 20 years and five months: he was mild by nature, and more inclined to live in peace than to command many provinces: in short, he was content with his paternal kingdom of the West-Saxons, and gave over as appanages to his son Ethelstan the others which his father had subdued. He assisted Burhred king of the Mercians with an auxiliary army against the Britons, and exalted him wonderfully by giving him his daughter in marriage. The Danish pirates, who wandered over the whole island, and infested all its coasts with unexpected landings, were crushed more than once by him and his generals; though, according to the lot of war, he received frequent and severe losses at the hands of the same, whereby London and almost all Kent were laid waste. But a stop was always put to these losses by the energy of the king's counsellors, who who would never allow the enemy to offend with impunity, but took vengeance upon them with their united forces. For he had, in his time, two excellent prelates, the blessed Swithin of Winchester, and Alstan of Sherborne; who, seeing that the king was of a dull and heavy mind, impelled him by their admonitions to the science of ruling. Swithun, sickened with earthly things, taught his lord to look to above; Alstan, thinking that public matters also were not to be neglected, encouraged him against the Danes, himself supplying money to the treasury, himself marshalling the army. He who reads the annals, [probably the Saxon chronicle is meant] will find many of his achievements both bravely begun and happily ended. He lived 50 years in his bishopric, happy in having lived to do good for so long a time. I would willingly praise him, except that, led astray by human covetousness he acted unlawfully when he deprived the monastery of Malmesbury of its possessions. We feel to this day the effects of his shameless conduct, though the place immediately after his death, struggled its way out of the violence that had been done it, even down to our own times, when it has fallen again into the same danger [seized by Roger Bp of Salisbury in 1118] .... Ethelwulf relying on these two supporters, and providing for that which was without, whilst he did not slight what was within, after he had triumphed over his enemies, turned to the worship of God, and granted to Christ's servants the tenth of every hide of land within his kingdom, freed from all duties and from all annoyances. But how little glory was that? When he had settled his kingdom, he went to Rome, and there, he gave to St Peter the tribute, which England still pays, in presence of pope Leo the Fourth, who also, before that, had honorably received and anointed for king his son Alfred when he had been sent unto him. Ethelwolf remained there a whole year, and beautifully repaired the school of the English, which, they say, was first founded by Offa king of the Mercians, and had been burnt the year before.

Saxon Chronicle Asser Ethelwerd

that king Beorhtric unwittingly tasted of the poison, though the queen intended to give it to the young man only, but the king took it too quickly, and so both perished.

Beorhtric therefore being dead, the queen could remain no longer among the Saxons, but sailed beyond the sea with immense treasures, and went to the court of the great and famous Charles, king of the Franks. As she stood before the throne, and offered him money, Charles said to her, "Choose, Eadburgh, between me and my son, who stands here with me." She replied, foolishly, and without deliberation, "If I am to have my choice, I choose your son, because he is younger than you." At which Charles smiled and answered, "If you had chosen me, you would have had my son; but as you have chosen him, you shall not have either of us."

However, he gave her a large convent of nuns, in which, having laid aside the secular habit and taken the religious dress, she discharged the office of abbess during a few years: for, as she is said to have lived irrationally in her own country, so she appears to have acted still more so in that foreign country; for being convicted of having had unlawful intercourse with a man of her own nation, she was expelled from the monastery by king Charles's order, and lived a vicious life of reproach in poverty and misery until her death; so that at last, accompanied by one slave only, as we have heard from many who saw her, she begged her bread daily at Pavia, and so miserably died.

Now king Æthelwulf lived two years after his return from Rome; during which, among many other good deeds of this present life, reflecting on his departure according to the way of all flesh, that his sons might not quarrel unreasonably after his death, he ordered a letter of inheritance, or instructions to be written, in which he ordered that his kingdom should be divided between his two eldest sons, his private inheritance between his sons, his daughter, and his relations, and the money which he left behind him, between his sons and nobles, and for the good of his soul.

Of this prudent policy we have thought fit to record a few instances out of many for posterity to imitate; namely, such as are understood to belong principally to the needs of the soul; for the others, which relate only to human dispensation, it is not necessary to insert in this work, lest prolixity should create disgust in those who

56 Florence

hat king Bertric unwittingly tasted of the poison, though the
ueen intended to give it to the young man only, but the
king took it too quickly, and so both perished.

Bertric therefore being dead, the queen could remain no
nger among the West-Saxons, but sailed beyond the sea
ith immense treasures, and went to the court of the great
nd famous Charles, king of the Franks. As she stood
efore the throne, and offered him money, Charles said to
er, "Choose, Eadburga, between me and my son, who stands
ere with me." She replied, foolishly, and without deliber-
tion, "If I am to have my choice, I choose your son, be-
ause he is younger than you." At which Charles smiled
nd answered, "If you had chosen me, you would have
ad my son; but as you have chosen him, you shall not
have either of us."

However, he gave her a large convent of nuns, in which,
aving laid aside the secular habit and taken the religious
ress, she discharged the office of abbess during a few years;
or, having been violated by a lay-man
f her own nation, and expelled from
he monastery by king Charles's order,
he at last brought her life to
n end in poverty and
misery.

Huntingdon

Simeon

9 King Æthelwulf lived two years, after his return from Rome; during which among many other good deeds of this present life, reflecting on his departure according to the way of all flesh, that his sons might not quarrel unreasonably after their father's death, he ordered a letter of inheritance to be written, in which he ordered that his kingdom should be divided between his two eldest sons, Æthelbald and Æthelbert, his private inheritance between his sons, his daughter, and his relations, and the money which he left behind him, between his sons and nobles, and for the good of his soul.

4 And when he [Ethelwolf] had kept her [Judith] two years.

The most merciful king Ethelwlf lived two years after he set out for the city of Romulus.

Among other good deeds of this present life, to which he gave his royal mind, he meditated before-hand on his own death, and, that his sons might not quarrel after he had departed this life, he composed an epistle in an elegant style, wherein he gave away all the things which belonged to himself.

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd 85
	read or wish to hear my work. For the benefit of his soul, then, which he studied to promote in all things from the first flower of his youth, he directed through all his hereditary dominions, that one poor man in ten,* either native or foreigner, should be supplied with meat, drink, and clothing, by his successors, until the day of judgment; supposing, however, that the country should still be inhabited both by men and cattle, and should not become deserted. He commanded also a large sum of money, namely, three hundred mancuses, to be carried every year to Rome for the good of his soul, to be distributed in the following manner: namely, a hundred mancuses in honour of St Peter, specially to buy oil for the lights of the church of that apostle on Easter eve, and also at the cock-crow: a hundred mancuses in honour of St Paul, for the same purpose of buying oil for the church of St Paul the apostle, to light the lamps on Easter eve and at the cock-crow; and a hundred mancuses for the universal apostolic pontiff.	

* "In decem mancentibus" is the expression of Asser. "in decem manais," which is less intelligible, of Simeon.

(9) A. 857.

CHARTERS IN 857. 1. BURGRED of Mercia. April 18, subscribed also by "Æthelswith regina," and others. II, 63.

(10) A. 858.

2 And about two years after he came from France he died, and his body lies at Winchester.

3 And he reigned eighteen years and a half.‡

But when king Ethelwulf was dead,

Lastly, after a year king Athulf died, and his body reposes in the city of Winchester.

And then was completed the fiftieth year from the beginning of king Egbyrht's reign.

HERE ENDS THE THIRD BOOK,
AND THE PROLOGUE OF THE FOURTH BOOK HERE BEGINS.

THREE BOOKS ARE NOW FINISHED, AND IT REMAINS TO GUIDE MY PEN TO THE FOURTH, IN WHICH

‡ Here follows (as paragraph 4 according to the figures) the genealogy given at page 6.

858 **Florence**

10 For the benefit of his soul, then, which he studied to promote in all things from the first flower of his youth, he directed through all his hereditary dominions, that one poor man in ten, either native or foreigner, should be supplied with meat, drink, and clothing, by his successors, until the day of judgment; supposing, however, that the country should still be inhabited both by men and cattle, and should not become deserted. He commanded also a large sum of money, namely 300 mancuses of pennies yearly to be carried to Rome for the good of his soul, to be distributed in the following manner: namely, an hundred mancuses in honour of St Peter, specially to buy oil for the lights of the church of that apostle on Easter eve, and also at the cock-crow: a hundred mancuses in honour of St Paul, for the same purpose, and 100 mancuses for the universal apostolic pontiff.

Huntingdon

Simeon

Throughout all the inheritance of his kingdom, he commanded that for every ten manses one poor man, either native or foreign, should be assisted or fed, with meat and drink or raiment, for himself and for all his successors.

He also commanded that 300 mancuses should be carried to Rome for the redemption of his soul; 100 to the gate of St Peter especially to buy oil, 100 in honor of St Paul, and 100 for the universal apostolic pope.

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(16) 857.

MATT. WESTM. The same year died Cedda bishop of Hereford, to whom succeeded Albert.

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(17) 858.

11 When king Ethelwulf was dead,* on the ides of January [JAN. 13] and was buried at Winchester,

* The ANNALS say that he was buried at Stæningham [Steyning in Essex].

5 He was removed from among men, and was buried at Winchester.

6 He had first been bishop at Winchester, but, on the death of Egbrict his father, necessity compelling it, he was made king; and, having married a wife, he begat four sons, who were all kings after him.

When, therefore, the glorious king Ethelwulf was dead,

Saxon Chronicle | Asser | Ethelwerd 858

ALSO WILL BE FOUND GREATER GAIN, AND THE ORIGIN OF OUR RACE IS MORE CLEARLY INDICATED. AND, ALTHOUGH I MAY SEEM TO SEND YOU A LOAD OF READING, DEAREST SISTER OF MY DESIRE, DO NOT JUDGE ME HARSHLY, BUT AS MY WRITINGS WERE IN LOVE TO YOU, SO MAY YOU READ THEM.

AND MAY GOD ALMIGHTY, WHO IS PRAISED BOTH IN TRINITY AND IN UNIPOTENCE, EVER PRESERVE YOU UNDER THE SHADOW OF HIS WINGS, AND YOUR COMPANIONS WITH YOU. AMEN!

HERE ENDS THE PROLOGUE.

CHAP. I.—OF THE REIGN OF THE SONS OF KING ATHULF, NAMELY ETHELBALD AND ETHELBYRHT.

5 And then Æthelwulf's two sons succeeded to the kingdom; Æthelbald to the kingdom of the West-Saxons; and Æthelbryht to the kingdom of the Kentish-men, and to the kingdom of the East-Saxons and to Surrey and to the kingdom of the South-Saxons.

Meanwhile after the death of king Athulf, his sons were raised to the kingdom, namely Ethelbald over the Western Angles, and Æthelbyrht over the men of Kent, and the Eastern, Southern, and Midland Angles.

His son Æthelbald, contrary to God's prohibition and the dignity of a Christian, contrary also to the custom of all the pagans, ascended his father's bed, and married Judith, daughter of Charles, king of the Franks, and drew down much infamy upon himself from all who heard of it.

CHARTERS IN 858. ÆTHILBERHT king of Kent. II, 64.

6 And then Æthelbald reigned five years.‡

During two years and a half of licentiousness after his father he held the government of the West-Saxons.

When five years were completed,

‡ Here follows par. 7, given at note * in page 18.

A. 859.

ANNALS. ANNO 859. This year it began to freeze two days before the calends of December [Nov. 29] and ended on the nones of April [AP. 5].

CHARTERS IN 859. PLEGRED subscribed also by "Ethelwulf rex." "Ethelbeald filii. regis," and others. II, 66.

A. 860.
Here died king Æthelbald and his body lies at Sherburne.

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 860, which was the twelfth from king Ælfred's birth, died Æthelbald, and was buried at Sherborne.

king Ethelbald died,

And Æthelbryht succeeded to all the realm of his brother, and he held it in goodly concord and in great tranquillity.

His brother Æthelberht, as was fitting, joined Kent, Surrey, and Sussex also to his dominion.

and his brother Æthelbyrht succeeded to the possessions of both.

And in his days a large fleet came to land,

In his days a large army of pagans, came up from the

In his days a large fleet of pagans came to land, and

860 Florence . Huntingdon Simeon

MATT. WESTM. In the year of Grace 858, ... died Æthelbald bishop of Lichfield, to whom succeeded Humbert.

The aforesaid most noble king left to his son Ethelbald the hereditary kingdom of Wessex. To his son Ethelbert he left the kingdom of Kent and Essex and Sussex. Both the brothers therefore, youths of the best disposition, ruled happily their kingdom, whilst each lived,

12 His son Æthelbald, contrary to God's prohibition and the dignity of a Christian, contrary also to the custom of all the pagans, ascended his father's bed, and married Judith, daughter of Charles, king of the Franks, and thus

His son Ethelbald, in spite of the prohibition of Jesus Christ, and contrary to the custom of all the pagans, ascended his father's bed, and took to wife, with great infamy, Judith daughter of Charles king of the Franks, and thus

13 during two years and a half of licentiousness after his father he held the government of the West-Saxons.

When Adelbald king of Wessex had held his kingdom in peace five years,

lawless, for two years and a half, he held the helm of the West-Saxons, after the death of his noble father.

859.

MATT. WESTM. In the year of Grace 859, Æthelbald king of the West-Saxons, growing wise out of his error aforesaid, dismissed Judith his step-mother, whose bed he had polluted, and having done penance, governed his kingdom with peace and justice, for the rest of his life.

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860. Died Æthelbald king and was buried at Sherborne.

he was cut off by an early death: all England mourned the youth of king Adelbald, and great woe was made for him. They buried him at Sherborne, and England afterwards felt how much it had lost in him.

In the year 860, the 12th after the birth of the noble prince Elfred, Ethelbald died and was buried in Sherborne.

His brother Æthelbert, as was fitting, joined Kent, Surrey, and Sussex also to his dominion.

Adelbricht the brother of the aforesaid king, reigned after him over Wessex, who before was king of Kent.

After his death his brother Ethelbyrht added these provinces to his own kingdom; that is Kent, Surrey and Sussex, with all their towns and territories, as was fitting.

In his days a large army of pagans, came up from the

In his days came a naval host, and

In the course of that year, a great army of pagans, com-

Saxon Chronicle

and the crews stormed Winchester. And alderman Osric with the men of Hampshire, and alderman Æthelwulf with the men of Berkshire, fought against the army, and put them to flight, and had possession of the place of slaughter.

Asser

sea, and attacked and destroyed the city of Winchester. As they were returning laden with booty to their ships, Osric, earl of Hampshire, with his men, and earl Æthelwulf, with the men of Berkshire, confronted them bravely; a severe battle took place, and the pagans were slain on every side; and, finding themselves unable to resist, they took flight like women, and the Christians were masters of the place of death.

Ethelwerd 860

destroyed the royal city which is called Winton. They were encountered by Osric duke of Hampshire, and Athulf duke of Berkshire: a battle ensued; the pagans were routed, and the English gained the victory.

CHARTERS IN 860. 1. ÆTHELBERHT of Wessex, subscribed also by "Æthelred filius regis," and others. II, 68. 2. ÆTHELBALD king of Wessex, signed also by "Æthelberht rex." "Judith regis filius [sic MS.]," and others. II, 69. 3. A third charter, subscribed by "ÆTHELBEARHT rex," "Æthelred fili. regis," "Elfræd fili. regis," and others, without a date, is given in II, 70, as belonging to either 860, 861, or 862.

(2) A. 861.

CHARTERS IN 861: none.

(4) A. 862.

(3) Here died S. Swithun the bishop.

As St Swithin is such a well-known personage, the following notice of him by MATTHEW of WESTMINSTER, may amuse some of my readers.

"In the year of Grace 862, Saint Swithin, bishop of the city of Winchester, departed to the Lord. This holy man, whilst he still lived, was the possessor of many virtues, but was most famous for mildness and humility. It happened once, that this servant of God was sitting by chance with the workmen at Winchester bridge, that his presence might stir them into activity: when lo, a woman carrying eggs for sale passed by on her way to the city. The workmen all ran round her, making fun, as men of that kind often do, and broke all her eggs for her. When the news of this shameful deed and the poor woman's complaint reached the bishop's ears, he sighed at her loss, and moved to kindness, made the sign of the cross over the broken eggs, whereby they all became whole again. Of the humble-mindedness of this holy man, it is a memorable example, that, as often as he was about to dedicate a new church-building, he always went thither on foot, and not on a horse or in a carriage, however long the journey might be. And that this might not furnish ridicule to the ignorant, or be set down by the proud for vain glory, he used to withdraw himself from the sight of men, and travel always by night. He was a lover of solitary holiness and thought that he should sacrifice his interests to any external show. At length, when he was on the point of bidding farewell to this present life, he commanded his domestics, on their obedience to his episcopal authority, to bury his body outside the church, where it might be trodden under the feet of passers-by, and wetted by the dew from heaven. His successor in the bishopric was Ealferth, a man sufficiently learned in church matters, who for some time had wisely fulfilled the duties for his predecessor:

(5) A. 863.

6) A. 864.

8 Here the heathen army sat down in Thanet, and made peace with the men of Kent, and the men of Kent promised them money for the peace; and during the peace

2 In the year of our Lord's incarnation 864, the pagans wintered in the isle of Thanet, and made a firm treaty with the men of Kent, who promised them money for adhering to their covenant; but

After four years, from the death of king Æthelbald, the pagans strengthen their position in the isle of Thanet, and promise to be at peace with the men of Kent, who on their part prepare money

864

Florence

sea, and attacked and destroyed the city of Winchester. As they were returning laden with booty to their ships, Osric, earl of Hampshire, with his men, and earl Æthelulf, with the men of Berkshire, confronted them bravely; a severe battle took place, and the pagans were slain on every side, and, finding themselves unable to resist, they took flight like women, and the Christians were masters of the place of death.

Huntingdon

landing destroyed Winchester: and so

An ancient city fell
That many years had ruled.

Then duke Osric with [the men of] Hamptonshire, and duke Edelwlf with [the men of] Berkshire, fought against the same army; and, when they had put them to flight with great slaughter, our men were victorious.

Simeon

ing from the sea, assaulted and destroyed the city of Winchester. But when the aforesaid army was on its way back to the ships, loaded with booty, Osric the worthy leader of the men of Hampshire, came up with his people, and the good earl Ethelwlf with the men of Berkshire, manfully met them with an immense army, and joining battle, the pagans were slain on all sides by the English, who were aided by the angelic spirits.

And when the dreadful enemies were unable to stand any longer for their wounds, a great multitude cruelly fell, others hid themselves among the thick bushes, and some like women, took to flight. The English, with fortune smiling upon them, were masters of the field of death.

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(2) 861.

MATT. WESTM. In the year of Grace 861, ... died Rethun bishop of Leicester, to whom succeeded Aldred.

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(3) 862. Saint Swithin took his flight to heaven, the 10th Indiction, sixth before the nones of July [JULY 2] the 5th day of the week.

CHARTERS IN 862. 1. ÆTHELRED: subs. by Ælfred frater regis and others. II, 71. 2. ETHELBERT king of Wessex: subscribed also by "Ætherred fil. regis," "Ælfred fil. regis" and others. II, 73.

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(4) 863.

CHARTERS IN 863. 3, ETHELBERT, subscribed also by Ethered fil. reg. and others, II, 74. 2. A charter of EDWARD king of Mercia, &c. at II, 77, belongs to 860—865.

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(5) 864.

The pagans wintered in the isle of Thanet, and made a firm treaty with the men of Kent, who promised them money for adher-

In the 5th year of king Adelbrict, the army of the pagans came to Tenet; and, when the men of Kent had purchased of them a truce with money, they suddenly broke away one

In the year 864, the pagans wintered in the island which is called Thanet, and is surrounded on every side by the stream of the sea.

They made a solemn treaty with the men of Kent, who

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd 865
and the promise of money the army stole away by night, and ravaged all Kent to the eastward.	the pagans, like cunning foxes, burst from their camp by night, and setting at naught their engagements and spurning at the promised money, which they knew was less than they could get by plunder, they ravaged all the eastern coast of Kent.	ignorant of the future. But the Danes break their compact, and sallying out privily by night, lay waste all the eastern coast of Kent.
MATT. WESTM. In the year of Grace 864, died Humbert bishop of Lichfield, to whom succeeded Kinelerth.		CHARTERS IN 864. BURGRED of Mercia, July 25. subscribed also by "Æthelswyth regina." II, 79.

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(7) A. 865.	CHARTERS IN 865. none.	ANNALS. ANNO 865. The Normans came into France in the middle of July.

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(9) A. 866.		
1 And Æthelbryht reigned five years, and his body lies at Sherburne.	1 Æthelberht governed his kingdom five years in peace, with the love and respect of his subjects, who felt deep sorrow when he went the way of all flesh. His body was honourably interred at Sherborne by the side of his brother.	After one year king Æthelbyrht died, and his body rests peaceably in the monastery named Sherborne.
CHARTERS IN 866. 1. BURGRED king of Mercia, subscribed also by "Æthelswyth regina" and others. II, 80. 2. Another of BURGRED, Æthelswyth and others, II, 81. 3. A charter of EALHHERE, [II, 83] very mutilated and imperfect, is refered to some period between 860 and 866.		
		CHAP. II. OF THE REIGN OF KING ETHELRED.
Here Æthered, Æthelbyrht's brother, succeeded to the kingdom of the West-Saxons.	In the year of our Lord's incarnation 866, which was the eighteenth of king Alfred, Æthelred, brother of Æthelbert, king of the West Saxons, undertook the government of the kingdom.	Ethered succeeded to the throne after the death of his brother Ethelbyrht.
And the same year a great heathen army came to the land of the English nation, and took up their winter quarters among the East-Angles, and there were horsed; and the East-Angles made peace with them.	And the same year a large fleet of pagans came to Britain from the Danube,* and wintered in the kingdom of the Eastern-Saxons, which is called in Saxon East-Anglia; and there they became principally an army of cavalry.	In the same year the fleets of the tyrant Ingware arrived in England from the north, and wintered among the East Angles, and having established their arms there, they get on their horses, and make peace with all the inhabitants in the neighbourhood.
* DE DANUBIO or -BIA is probably a corruption of DE DANIA "from Denmark."		
	But, to speak in nautical phrase, I will no longer commit my vessel to the power of the waves and of its sails, or keeping off from land steer my round-about course through so many calamities of wars and series of years, but will return to that which first prompted me to this task; that is to say, I think it right in this place briefly to relate as much as has come to my knowledge about the character of my revered lord Alfred, king of the Anglo-Saxons, during the years that he was an infant and a boy.	

866 **Florence** **Huntingdon** **Simeon**

ing to their covenant; but the pagans, like cunning foxes, burst from their camp by night, and setting at naught the promised money, which they knew was less than they could get by plunder, they ravaged all the eastern coast of Kent.

night, and plundered the eastern parts of Kent.

promised to pay them money, if they should keep the treaty. But in the mean time, breaking forth secretly by night from their camp, like foxes, and violating the truce, and despising the promise of money, they remained quiet for a few days. But, oh horrible! they devastated the eastern coast of the Kentish people. They knew that they should get greater money by stolen booty than by peace: as also it happened.

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(6) 865.

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(7) 866.

1 Æthelbert governed his kingdom five years in peace, with the love and respect of his subjects, who felt deep sorrow when he went the way of all flesh. His body was honourably interred at Sherborn by the side of his brother.

Æthelred, brotber of Æthelbert king of the West-Saxons, undertook the government of the kingdom.

The same year, when Adelbrict had reigned five years over Wessex, and ten years over Kent, he tasted death. After him Adelred his brother received the insignia of the kingdom.

Thus king Ethelbyrht, for five years, peacefully, amiably, and honorably ruled the kingdom that had been intrusted to him; and it was to the great grief of his princes, bishops, and all his people, that he went the way of all flesh: leaving the government of his earthly kingdom, he began to be a partaker of the other.

2 He was buried near his brother in Sherborne, where he awaits the comfort of a future resurrection.

In the following year, that is 866, which was the 18th since the birth of Elfred, Ethelred the brother of Ethelbyrt king of the West-Saxons, undertook the government of the kingdom.

And the same year a large fleet of pagans came to Britain from the Danube,* and wintered in the kingdom of the Eastern-Angles, which is called in Saxon East-Anglia; and there they became principally an army of cavalry.

This year there came into the country of the English a very large army of the pagans, whose leaders were Hinguar and Ubba, very brave but very cruel men. Hinguar was a man of great talent, but Ubba was a man of wonderful bravery.

Passing the winter among the East-Angles, they received from them a truce and horses, and for the sake of peace spared their strength for a while.

In the same year a great fleet of pagans from Danubia entered the borders of Britain, and so wintered on the kingdom of the Eastern-Anglia, which is called in the Saxon tongue East-angle, and there the large army became cavalry, riding and scouring here and there, carrying off an enormous booty, and sparing neither men nor women, widows nor maids.

In these days the prince Elfred began with sweet meditation to be imbued with

† This notice of Alfred's early years occurs in Florence under 871, but is placed here in juxta-position with Asser and Simeon.

† I think in right in this place briefly to relate about his [Alfred's] character during the years that he was an infant and a boy.

Saxon Chronicle | Asser | Ethelwerd 866

He was beloved by his father and mother, and even by all the people, above all his brothers, and was educated altogether at the court of the king. As he advanced through the years of infancy and youth, his form appeared more comely than that of his brothers; in look, in speech, and in manners he was more graceful than they. His noble nature implanted in him from his cradle a love of wisdom above all things; but, with shame be it spoken, by the unworthy neglect of his parents and nurses, he remained illiterate even till he was twelve years old or more; but he listened with serious attention to the Saxon poems which he often heard recited, and easily retained them in his docile memory. He was a zealous practiser of hunting in all its branches, and hunted with great assiduity and success; for skill and good fortune in this art, as in all others, are among the gifts of God, as we also have often witnessed.

On a certain day, therefore, his mother was showing him and his brothers* a Saxon book of poetry which she held in her hand, and said, "Whichever of you shall the soonest learn this volume shall have it for his own." Stimulated by these words, or rather by the Divine inspiration, and allured by the beautifully illuminated letter at the beginning of the volume, he spoke before all his brothers, who, though his seniors in age, were not so in grace, and answered, "Will you really give that book to one of us, that is to say, to him who can first understand and repeat it to you?" At this his mother smiled with satisfaction, and confirmed what she had before said. Upon which the boy took the book out of her hand, and went to his master to read it, and in due time brought it to his mother and recited it.

* Rather 'his brother,' for in 853, when Alfred was 12 years old, Ethelbert was king.

After this he learned the daily course, that is, the celebration of the hours, and afterwards certain psalms, and several prayers, contained in a certain book which he kept day and night in his bosom, as we ourselves have seen, and carried about with him to assist his prayers, amid all the bustle and business of this present life. But sad to say! he could not gratify his most ardent wish to learn the liberal arts, because, as he said, there were no good readers at that time in all the kingdom of the West-Saxons.

This he confessed, with many lamentations and sighs, to have been one of his greatest difficulties and impediments in this life, namely, that when he was young and had the capacity for learning, he could not find teachers; but, when he was more advanced in life, he was harassed by so many diseases unknown to all the physicians of this island, as well as by internal and external anxieties of sovereignty, and by continual invasions of the pagans, and had his teachers and writers also so much disturbed, that there was no time for reading. But yet among the impediments of this present life, from infancy up to the present time, and, as I believe, even until his death, he continued to feel the same insatiable desire of knowledge, and still aspires after it.

866 Florence

He was beloved by his father and mother, and even by all the people, above all his brothers, and was educated altogether at the court of the king. As he advanced through the years of infancy and youth, his form appeared more comely than that of his brothers; in look, in speech, and in manners he was more graceful than they.

But, with shame be it spoken, by the unworthy neglect of his parents and nurses, he remained illiterate even till he was twelve years old or more; but he listened with serious attention to the Saxon poems which he often heard recited, and easily retained them in his docile memory.

He practised hunting in all its branches, with great assiduity and success; as in all the other gifts of God.

On a certain day, therefore, his mother was showing him and his brothers a Saxon book of poetry, which she held in her hand, and said, "Whichever of you shall the soonest learn this volume shall have it for his own." Stimulated by these words, or rather by the Divine inspiration, and allured by the beautifully illuminated letter at the beginning of the volume, he spoke before all his brothers, who though his seniors in age, were not so in grace, and answered, "Will you really give that book to one of us, that is to say, to him who can first understand and repeat it to you?" At this his mother smiled with satisfaction, and confirmed what she had before said. Upon which the boy took the book out of her hand, and went to his master to read it, and in due time brought it to his mother and recited it.

After this he learned the daily course, that is, the celebration of the hours and afterwards certain psalms, and several prayers, contained in a certain book which he kept day and night in his bosom, and carried about with him to assist his prayers, amid all the bustle and business of this present life. But sad to say! he could not gratify his most ardent wish to learn the liberal arts, because, as he said, there were no good readers at that time in all the kingdom of the West-Saxons.

Huntingdon

Simeon

heavenly doctrines; he was loved from his cradle by his father and mother with a wonderful love beyond all his brothers. Lastly, as his stature encreased during his youthful age, his form seemed more comely than his other brothers, and he shone alike remarkable in his countenance and in his graceful speech. As the stag thirsts for the water, so did he thirst that his inmost soul should be satiated, and his bosom be imbued with heavenly learning. But, oh shame! by the carelessness of his parents and attendants he remained illiterate even to the twelfth year of his age. The glorious young man and future king studied day and night to learn the Saxon poems, and was easy to be taught, industrious in the art of hunting, and incomparable in every perfection.

On a certain day, therefore, his worthy mother was showing him and his brothers a Saxon book of poetry, which she held in her hand, and said, "Whichever of you shall the soonest learn this volume shall have it for his own." Stimulated by the Divine inspiration, and allured by the beautifully illuminated letter at the beginning of the volume, he answered his mother, "Will you really give that book?" At that his mother smiled with satisfaction, and confirmed what she had before said. Upon which the boy took the book out of her hand, and went to his master, shewed the book and read it, his teacher shewing him how to read it, and in due time brought it to his mother and recited it.

His mother gave boundless thanks to the goodness of the Saviour, seeing that the grace of God was in the mind of her child.

After this inflamed with the divine love, he learned certain psalms, and the daily course, that is, the celebration of the hours, contained in a certain book which he kept day and night in his bosom, and carried about with him.

A. 867.

Here the army went from East-Anglia over Humber-mouth to Eoforwic-chester [York] in North-humbria.

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 867, which was the nineteenth of the life of the aforesaid king Alfred, the army of pagans before mentioned removed from the East-Angles to the city of York, which is situated on the north bank of the river Humber.

After one year that army, leaving the eastern parts, crossed the river Humber into Northumberland to the city of Evorac, which is now commonly called the city of Eoferwic [York].

And there was much dissension among that people, and they had cast out their king Osbryht, and had taken to themselves a king, Ælla, of unkingly blood; but late in the year they resolved that they would fight against the army; and therefore they gathered a large force, and sought the army at the town of York, and stormed the town, and some of them got

At that time a violent discord arose, by the instigation of the devil, among the inhabitants of Northunmberland; as always is used to happen among a people who have incurred the wrath of God. For the Northumbrians at that time, as we have said, had expelled their lawful king Osbert, and appointed a certain tyrant named Ælla, not of royal birth, over the affairs of the kingdom; but when the pagans approached, by divine Providence, and the union of the nobles for the common good, that discord was a little appeased, and Osbert and Ælla uniting their resources, and assembling an army, marched to York. The pagans fled at their approach, and attempted to defend themselves within the walls to the city. The Christians, perceiving their flight and the terror they were in, determined to pursue them into the town and destroy its walls; which they succeeded in doing; for that city was not surrounded at that time with firm or strong walls: and

For there was then a great civil dissension between the inhabitants of that land, and they were so enraged that they also expelled their king Osbyrht from his seat; and having confirmed their resolves, they chose an obscure person for their king; and after some delay they turned their thoughts to raise an army and repulse those who were advancing. They collected together no small bodies of troops, and reconnoitred the enemy: their rage

867 Florence

Huntingdon

Simeon

O happy race of men! O prudent king! you carry the key of wisdom, you love wisdom, and shall be wise, doing judgment and justice upon the earth! Clerks, attend and see how your king carries the book in his bosom day and night, whilst you neither know nor wish to know the law of God. The same man, when he became king, lamented to himself that he had not been educated in the liberal arts.

867.

The army of pagans before mentioned removed from the East-Angles to the city of York, which is situated on the north bank of the river Humber.

In the second year of king Adelred, the aforesaid army, led by Hinguar and Ubba, came into Northumbria at Eoverwic [York];

In the year 867, the 19th from the birth of king Elfred, the aforesaid army of pagans removed from the Eastern Angles to the city of York, which lies on the northern bank of the river Humber.

At that time a violent discord arose, by the instigation of the devil, among the inhabitants of Northumberland; as always is used to happen among a people who have incurred the wrath of God. For the Northumbrians at that time, as we have said, had expelled their lawful king Osbriht, and appointed a certain tyrant named Ælla, not of royal birth, over the affairs of the kingdom; but when the pagans approached, by divine Providence, and the union of the nobles for the common good, that discord was a little appeased, and Osbriht and Ælla uniting their resources, and assembling an army, marched to York. The pagans fled at their approach, and attempted to defend themselves within the walls of the city. The Christians, perceiving their flight and the terror they were in, determined to destroy the walls of the town, which they succeeded in doing; for that city was not surrounded at that time with firm or strong walls, and

and there was among the people of that country a great discord, with the usual treachery, because they had cast off their king Osbrict, and had received another king, a degenerate man named Ellan: and therefore, having slowly come to an agreement, and assembled an army, they came to Eoverwic [York], in which the pagan army was; and, having broken down the wall they rushed in and fought with them.

CHARTERS IN 867. ETHELRED of Wessex, at Canterbury, subscribed by forty others. II, 83.

At the same time a great discord was kindled between the people of Northumberland, and most aptly; for he who loves hatred shall find it. For the Northumbrians at that time, had expelled their lawful king Osbert, and appointed a certain tyrant named Ælla, over the affairs of the kingdom; but when the pagans approached, by divine Providence, and the union of the nobles for the common good, that discord was a little appeased, and Osbert and Ælla uniting their resources, and assembling an army, marched to York. The pagans fled at their approach, and the Christians perceiving their flight and the terror they were in, proved themselves stronger than they.

Saxon Chronicle

within, and there was an excessive slaughter made of the North-humbrians, some within some without, and the kings were both slain: and the remainder made peace with the army.

BROMPTON.

"King Osbert, during a residence at York, went out one day to hunt in a forest not far distant from the city, and on his return called at the house of Bruern Brocard, one of his principal nobles, to refresh himself, after the fatigues of the day. Bruern, knowing nothing of the king's coming, was gone down to the sea-side to secure the coast against pirates: and his wife, who was a lady of incomparable beauty, and adorned with all the accomplishments which belong to her sex, entertained the king at dinner with due hospitality and splendour. Osbert was charmed with her beauty and her behaviour: as soon as dinner was over, he pretended some secret business of great importance, and, attended to the door by some of his own servants, who were privy to his design, he led her to a private apartment, where he treated her with violence, and committed a shameful breach of the faith which had been reposed in him. Having thus had his will, he returned to York, whilst the lady, whom he had abused, lamented so bitterly, that her face was sore with weeping. Her husband, upon his return, asked the cause of so sudden a change, and such unusual sadness: upon which she told him all that had happened to her by the violence of the king. When she had finished the story, her husband comforted her, and bade her not to afflict herself, since he assured her, that because she had told him the truth, he would not love her less than he had done before; and, by God's good pleasure, would revenge both himself and her for the wrong which had been done them.

And the same year bishop Ealchstan died; and he had the bishopric of Shireburne fifty years, and his body lies there in the town.

Asser

when the Christians had made a breach as they had purposed, and many of them had entered into the town, the pagans, urged by despair and necessity, made a fierce sally upon them, slew them, routed them, and cut them down on all sides, both within and without the walls.

In that battle fell almost all the Northumbrian warriors, with both the kings and a multitude of nobles; the remainder, who escaped, made peace with the pagans.

In the same year, Ealhstan, bishop of the church of Sherborne, went the way of all flesh, after he had honourably ruled his see four years, and he was buried at Sherborne.

Ethelwerd 868

excited: they joined battle, a miserable slaughter took place on both sides, and the kings were slain. Those of them who were left made peace with the hostile army.

Immediately after this he sent for all his relations and friends, to whom he revealed the affront which had been put upon him, and his intention to take speedy vengeance for the same. To this they all consented, and approving his design, took horse, and rode with him to York. The king, when he saw him, invited him in civil terms to draw near; but Bruern, having all his relations at his back, defied the king, and renounced his allegiance, giving up all his lands and whatsoever else he held of him. This done, without any more words, Bruern withdrew, making no stay at all at court. Taking leave of his friends, he sailed straightway into Denmark, where he made a complaint to Codric, king of the country, of the affront offered to him and his wife by Osbert, and desired his speedy succour, that he might be in a condition to take vengeance for the injury. Codrin and the Danes were rejoiced at this event, which gave them a sufficient excuse to invade England, that they might avenge the wrongs of Bruern, who was descended from their blood."

In the same year died Eanulf, duke of Somerset; also bishop Ealhstan, fifty years after his succession to the bishopric, in the diocese called Sherborne. There also his body now reposes; and that of the above-named duke in the monastery called Glastonbury.

A. 868.

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 868, which was the twentieth of king Alfred's life,

The aforesaid revered king Alfred, but at that time occupying a subordinate station, asked and obtained in marriage a noble Mercian lady, daughter of Æthelred, surnamed Mucil,* earl of the Gaini.†

The mother of this lady was named Edburga, of the royal line of Mercia, whom we have often seen with our own eyes a few years before her death.

She was a venerable lady, and after the decease of her husband, she remained many years a widow, even till her own death.

After one year therefore, the

ANNALS. ANNO 868. A great famine.

* i. e. MICKLE, 'the BIG.'

† Hence GAINSBOROUGH.

CHARTERS IN 868. 1. ETHELRED king of Wessex &c. II, 86. 2. CIALULF: subscribed by "Æthered rex" and others. II, 87. 3. BURGRED of Mercia, August 1, subscribed by Ethelredus rex West-Saxoniæ, Alfredus frater regis West-Saxoniæ Edmundus rex West-Angliæ [a mistake for East-Angliæ] and others, II, 89. 4. ETHELSWITH, subscribed also by "Æthelred rex Occidentalium Saxonum," "Ælfred frater regis," "Burgred rex Merciorum" and others. II, 94.

868 **Florence**

when the Christians had made a breach as they had purposed, and many of them had entered into the town, along with the enemy, the pagans, urged by despair and necessity, made a fierce sally upon them, slew them, routed them, and cut them down on all sides, both within and without the walls.
In that battle fell almost all the Northumbrian warriors, with both the kings and a multitude of nobles; the remainder, who escaped, made peace with the pagans.

Huntingdon

There were slain both kings, Osbrict and Ælla and a numberless multitude of the Northumbrian nation, within the city and without; and those who remained, made truce with the pagans.

Simeon

They fought cruelly on both sides, and both the kings fell. The rest who escaped made peace with the Danes.

MATT. WESTM. In the year of Grace 867 .....Then the wicked conquerors, the Danes, plundering the whole province of Northumbria up to the mouth of the river Tyne, having conquered their enemies, made the country subject to themselves. The Northumbrian kings being slain, one Egbert, an Englishman by birth, gained the kingdom subject to the Danes, and held it 6 years.

In the same year, Ealhstan, bishop of the church of Sherborne, went the way of all flesh, after he had honourably ruled his see four years, and he was buried at Sherborne.

This year died bishop Alcstan; he was buried at Sherborne, where he was bishop 50 years.

In that same year Ealhstan, bishop of the church of Sherborne, left the course of this earthly life, when he had honourably ruled his bishopric for fifty years: he rests in the peace of the church, being decently buried in his episcopal see.

868.

A comet-star was seen most plainly this year.

The aforesaid revered king Alfred, but at that time occupying a subordinate station, asked and obtained in marriage a noble Mercian lady, daughter of Æthelred, surnamed Mucil, earl of the Gaini.
The mother of this lady was named Eadburg, of the royal line of Mercia.
She was a venerable lady, and after the decease of her husband, she remained many years a widow, even till her own death.

In the year 868, which was the 20th of king Elfred, he took a wife out of Mercia, to wit a lady of noble birth, daughter of Ethelred earl of the Gaini, who was surnamed "Mucel" by the English, because he was great in body and old in wisdom.

Saxon Chronicle

Here the same army went into Mercia to Snotengaham [NOTTINGHAM], and there took up their winter settlement.

And Burgræd king of the Mercians, and his witan, begged of Ethered king of the West-Saxons, and Ælfred his brother, that they would help them, that they might fight against the army.

And then they went with the West-Saxon power into Mercia as far as Nottingham, and there met with the army within the fortress; and besieged them therein: but there was no great battle; and the Mercians made peace with the army.

Asser

In the same year, the above-named army of pagans, leaving Northumberland, invaded Mercia and advanced to Nottingham, which is called in the British tongue, "Tigocobauc," but in Latin, the "House of Caves," and they wintered there that same year.

Immediately on their approach, Burhred, king of Mercia, and all the nobles of that nation, sent messengers to Æthered, king of the West-Saxons, and his brother Ælfred, suppliantly entreating them to come and aid them in fighting against the aforesaid army.

Their request was easily obtained; for the brothers, as soon as promised, assembled an immense army from all parts of their dominions, and entering Mercia, came to Nottingham, all eager for battle, and when the pagans, defended by the castle, refused to fight, and the Christians were unable to destroy the wall, peace was made between the Mercians and pagans, and the two brothers Æthelred and Ælfred, returned home with their troops.

Ethelwerd 868

army of the pagans, of whose arrival we have spoken above, measured out their camp in a place called Snotingaham [NOTTINGHAM], and there they passed the winter.

And Burhred king of the Mercians, with his nobles, consented to their remaining there without reproach.

868 Florence

In the same year, the above-named army of pagans, leaving Northumberland, invaded Mercia and advanced to Snotingaham, which is called in the British tongue, "Tigguocobauc," but in Latin, the "House of Caves," and they wintered there that same year.

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Huntingdon

King Adelred, in the third year of his reign, went to Snotingham [NOTTINGHAM] with his brother Alfred to help Burhred king of Mercia: for the aforesaid army had come to Nottingham, and was there in the winter.

Simeon

At that time the aforesaid army of pagans, leaving the Northumbrians, went on an unlucky visit to the city of Snotingham, which is called Tignocebanc in the British tongue, but in a Latin translation means the House of Caves. Here these insidious strangers wintered that same year; and their coming was sufficiently unpleasing to all the people. The warlike king of the Mercians, named Burhred, and all his nobles took council with his earls and fellow-soldiers and all the people under him, how he should vanquish the enemies by valour in battle, and drive them out of the kingdom.

He also sent swift messengers to Elfred that man of brilliant valour, and to Ethelred his brother, that they should render him brotherly help whereby they might conquer the enemy with victorious bravery: which they, like dauntless lions, did not delay to do.

Then Elfred, roused to action, begins with rapid orders to call together his army, recollecting this within his bosom:

He who hath a craven mind
And holds himself as mean or poor,
Within his breast will never find
The heart to aim at golden store.

A man who is fearful, and thinks himself needy or wretched, never fulfils what he longs for, unless he is brave in aiming at what he desires. His brother was kindled with like fury, and they came to Nottingham ready to stand against all temptations.

But the pagans covered by the walls of the fortress threaten war, draw up their forces, and shew a numerous army.

but they tremble, clearly seeing that the Christian people with a hundred and a thousand times a thousand resisted their enemies, at the exhortation of their sacred

A. 869.
Here the army again went to York, and sate there one year.

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 869, which was the twenty-first of king Alfred's life, the aforesaid army of the pagans, galloping back to Northumberland, went to York, and there passed the winter.

ANNALS. ANNO 869. There was, again, a great famine, a mortality among men, and a pest among cattle.

At the end of a year, therefore, the army was transported to the city of York, and there also they measured out their camp in the winter season.

CHARTERS IN 869. 1. BURGRED of Mercia, subscribed also by Æthelswith regina," and others. II, 94. 2. ETHELRED king of Wessex. II, 95.

A. 870.
Here the army rode across Mercia into East-Anglia, and took up their winter quarters at Thetford.
And the same winter king Eadmund fought against them, and the Danes got the victory, and slew the king, subdued all the land, and destroyed all the minsters which they came to.
The names of their chiefs who slew the king were Ingwair and Ubba.

¶ The death of St Edmund is related at great length in the ANNALS, but the account, as it there stands, bears evident marks of being an ecclesiastical legend, minute—as, all the ecclesiastical tales of that age are,—even to tediousness, and in this respect very different from all the secular histories of those times. Its details cannot be received without great suspicion.

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 870, which was the twenty-second of king Alfred's life, the above-named army of pagans passed through Mercia into East-Anglia, and wintered at Thetford.
In the same year Edmund, king of the East-Angles, fought most fiercely against them.
But, lamentable to say, the pagans triumphed, Edmund was slain in the battle, and the enemy reduced all that country to subjection.

Again after a year they departed, and passed through Mercia into East-Anglia, and there measured out their camp for the winter at Thetford. King Edmund carried on war against them for a short time, but he was slain there by them, and his body lies entombed at a place called Beadoricsuuyrthe, * and the barbarians obtained the victory, but with the loss of their king soon afterwards: for king Iuuar died the same year.

* St Edmund'sbury.

870 **Florence** **Huntingdon** **Simeon**

leaders. At length, by the grace of Almighty God, the blowing of the storm ceased, the hearts of the wicked were appeased: they asked peace and a truce from the Christians, as if they prayed to Christ himself to be merciful to them:

Ruler, check the boisterous wave,
And as thou rulest heaven above,
Cause the earth to be at peace
And bind it fast in love.

Peace was made between the kings and the pagans, and they parted one from the other, like sheep from the goats.

The oratory of St Andrew the Apostle at Kemesege was built and dedicated by Alhun bishop of Winchester.

869.

The aforesaid army of the pagans, galloping back to Northumberland, went to York, and there remained a whole year.

† The cruelties of the Danes, as related by Ingulf, Brompton and Matthew of Westminster, would fill many pages and rather concern the history of the church, having fallen mostly on the monasteries.

When therefore all the forces of the English were collected, and Hinguar saw his men besieged and unequal in strength, with the cunning of a fox, and soothing words, he obtained a truce from the English, and returning to York, remained there cruelly one year.†

In the year 869, which was the 21st of Elfred's life, the aforesaid army again went to the nation of the Northumbrians, and there remained a year raving and raging, slaying and destroying numbers of men and women.

BROMPTON." This year the city of Alclud, once so famous, and lying at the western end of the famous wall, was destroyed by the Danes.

870.

The above-named army of pagans passed through Mercia into East-Anglia, and there wintered at Thetford.

In the same year Edmund, the most blessed and glorious king of the East-Angles, as is read in his Passion, was martyred by the pagan king Inguar, in the Second Indiction, 12 Calends of Dec. [Nov. 20] being Sunday.

CHARTERS IN 870. No charters can be certainly ascribed to this year. There is one, of ETHELRED king of Wessex [vol. II, p. 97] without a date which therefore may belong to either of the years 867, 8, 9, 870 or 871.

In the year of our Lord's Incarnation 870, which was the 5th of king Adelred, St Eadmund went to heaven.

For the aforesaid army of king Hinguar coming through Mercia to Thetford, remained there the winter, and wrought dreadful destruction on that wretched people.

But king Eadmund, choosing to die rather than to see the desolation of his people, was taken by them, and shot by the arrows of those wicked men through his body, when it had been fastened to a tree. But the mercy of God wrought many signal miracles over his body.

In the following year, whilst the rays of the sun were lighting the climes of the world, and the 870th year from our Lord's incarnation was come, then dawned the day, on which king Elfred was in his 21st year.

But the enormous multitude of the Danes, and, if I may so speak, their troops of legions, were gathered together, so that they seemed to be many thousands, and as if they had increased from a thousand to 20 myriads. They then went through Mercia to the East-Angles, and boldly wintered in the city of Theodford. But king Eadmund, at that time, reigned over all the kingdoms of the East-Angles; a holy and just man, as the end of his blessed life proved. That same year the aforesaid king fought fiercely and manfully with his men against the army. But, because the merciful God foreknew that he was to arrive at the crown of mar-

Saxon Chronicle

Asser

Ethelwerd

THE INVASION OF EAST ANGLIA, ACCORDING TO BROMPTON, AROSE FROM THE FOLLOWING STORY:

"There was a man of royal birth in the kingdom of Denmark, named Lodbroc, who had two sons, Hinguar and Hubba. This man embarked one day with his hawk in a small boat, to catch ducks and other wild fowls on the adjoining sea coasts and islands. A terrible storm at length arose, by which Lodbroc was carried away, and tossed for several days over every part of the Ocean. After numberless perils, he was cast ashore on the coast of Norfolk, near the village of Redham. Here he was found having his hawk alone for his companion, and presented to king Edmund. That monarch, struck with the manly beauty of his form, retained him at his court, and heard from his own mouth the recital of his adventures. He was then associated with Berne the king's huntsman, and indulged in all the pleasures of the chase, for in the exercise both of hunting and hawking he was remarkably graceful, and succeeded in capturing both birds and beasts according as he had a mind. This, however, produced jealousy in the mind of Berne the huntsman, who one day, as they went out together hunting, set upon Lodbroc unawares, and having foully slain him, buried his body in the thickets of the forest. But Lodbroc was the master of a small dog of the harrier species which he had nourished from its birth, and which loved him much. When Berne the huntsman returned home with the other hounds, this little dog remained alone with his master's body. In the morning the king asked what had become of Lodbroc; to which Berne replied that he had parted from him yesterday in the wood, and had not seen him since. At that moment the harrier entered the hall, and went round, wagging its tail, and fawning on the whole company, and especially on the king. When he had eaten his fill, he again left the hall: this occurred repeatedly, until some one at last followed the dog to see where he went, and, having found the body of the murdered Lodbroc, came and told the story to the king.

At that same time they came to Medeshamstede, and burned and beat it down, slew abbot and monks, and all that place, which before was full rich, they reduced to nothing.

In the same year Ceolnoth, archbishop of Canterbury, went the way of all flesh, and was buried peaceably in his own city.

Archbishop Ceolnoth also died that same year, and is buried in the city of Canterbury.

And the same year died archbishop Ceolnoth.

Then went Æthered and Ælfred his brother, and took Æthelred bishop of Wiltshire, and appointed him archbishop of Canterbury, because formerly he had been a monk of the same minster of Canterbury. All so soon as he came to Canterbury, and he was stablished in his archbishopric, he then thought how he might expel the clerks who (were) there within, whom the archbishop Ceolnoth had (before) placed there for such need* . . . as we shall relate. The first year that he was made archbishop, there was so great a mortality, that of all the monks whom he found there within, no more than five monks survived. Then for the* . . . he (commanded) his chaplains, and also some priests of his vills, that they should help the few monks who there survived to do Christ's service, because he could not so readily find monks who might of themselves do the service; and for this reason he commanded that the priests, the while, until God should give peace in this land, should help the monks.

In that same time was this land much distressed by frequent battles, and hence the archbishop could not there effect it, for there was warfare and sorrow all his time over England; and hence the clerks remained with the monks. Nor was there ever a time that monks were not there within, and they ever had lordship over the priests. Again the archbishop Ceolnoth thought and also said to those who were with him, 'All so soon as God shall give peace in this land, either these priests shall be monks, or from elsewhere I will place within the minster as many monks as may do the service of themselves: for God knows that I. . . . . .)

* The MS. is imperfect in these places.

A. 871.

Here the army came to Reading in Wessex.

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 871, which was the twenty-third of king Alfred's life, the pagan army, of hateful memory, left the East-Angles, and entering

After one year therefore the army of the barbarians above-mentioned set out for Reading, and the principal object of the impious crew was to attack the West-Saxons; and

Florence

the affair was now diligently enquired into, and when the truth was at last discovered, the huntsman was exposed on the sea without oars in the boat which had belonged to Lodbroc. In a few days he was cast ashore in Denmark, and brought before the sons of Lodbroc, who putting him to the torture, demanded of him what had become of their father, to whom they knew the boat belonged. To this Berne replied, that their father Lodbroc had fallen into the hands of Edmund king of East-Anglia, by whose orders he had been put to death."

Huntingdon

tyrdom, he there fell gloriously. Of his passion I would fain insert some particulars into our history, that the sons of men may know and perceive how terrible is Christ the son of God in the counsels of men, and with what glorious triumph he adorns those whom he torments here under the name of suffering, that the saying may be fulfilled, He is not crowned except he strive lawfully, [II Tim. ii, 5].

Simeon

Now king Eadmund devoutly undertook the government of the East-Angles, and held it with the right hand of power, always adoring and glorifying Almighty God for all his good things which he had enjoyed.

In the same year Ceolnoth, archbishop of Canterbury, went the way of all flesh, and was buried peaceably in that same city.
To whom the venerable Æthelred succeeded.

The same year in which the illustrious king and martyr entered through the crown of martyrdom into the joys of heavenly felicity, Ceolnoth archbishop of the city of Dover, went the way of all flesh, and was buried by the clerks in the same city.

BROMPTON. When king Edmund was slain, his brother Edwold dreading the pleasures of the world seeing that a hard lot had fallen on himself and his brother, retired to the monastery of Carnelia in Dorsetshire near a clear well, which saint Augustine had formerly brought out of the earth by prayer to baptize the people in, and there he led a hermit's life on only bread and water.

MATT. WESTM. In the same year died Weremund bishop of Dommoc [Dunwich], after whom that see was transferred to Helmham, and, in the place of two bishops, one of whom had his see at Dommoc, and the other at Helmham, one bishop was ordained, by name Wilred, who had for his successors, in the same place, the following: Athulf, Ælfric, Theodred, Æthelstan, Algar, Alwin, Ælfric, another Ælfric, Stigand, Æthelm, and Herstan.

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871.

The pagan army, of hateful memory, left the East-Angles, and entering the kingdom of the West-Saxons, came to the royal

In the 6th year of king Adelred, a new army very great, like a flowing river that carries all along with it, went into Wessex as far as Reding; but not being able,

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 871, which was the 23rd of king Alfred's life, the pagan army, of hateful memory, left the East-Angles, and entering the kingdom of

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd 871
	the kingdom of the West-Saxons, came to the royal city, called Reading, situated on the south bank of the Thames, in the district called Berkshire.	three days after they came, their two consuls, forgetting that they were not on board their fleet, rode proudly through fields and meadows on horseback, which nature had denied to them.‡
And three days after this, two of their earls rode forth.	And there, on the third day after their arrival, their earls, with great part of the army, scoured the country for plunder, while the others made a rampart between the rivers Thames and Kennet on the right side of the same royal city.	
Then Alderman Æthelwulf met them at Englafield, and there fought against them, and got the victory: and there one of them, whose name was Sidroc, was slain.	They were encountered by Æthelwulf, earl of Berkshire, with his men, at a place called Englefield, both sides fought bravely, and made long resistance. At length one of the pagan earls was slain, and the greater part of the army destroyed; upon which the rest saved themselves by flight, and the Christians gained the victory.	But duke Adulf met them; and, though his troops were few, their hearts resided in brave dwellings: they point their darts, they rout the enemy, and triumph in abundant spoils.
About three days after this, king Æthered and Ælfred his brother led a large force to Reading, and fought against the army, and there was great slaughter made on either hand.	Four days afterwards, Æthelred, king of the West-Saxons, and his brother Ælfred, united their forces and marched to Reading, where, on their arrival, they cut to pieces the pagans whom they found outside the fortifications. But the pagans, nevertheless, sallied out from the gates, and a fierce engagement ensued. At last, grief to say, the Christians	At length four days after their meeting Ethered arrives with his army; an indescribable battle is fought, now these, now those urge on the fight with spears immoveable; duke Athulf falls, who a short

‡ This and many other passages of Ethelwerd are very obscure.

Florence

ty, called Reading, situated
the south bank of the
ames, in the district called
Berkshire.

nd there, on the third day
after their arrival, two
of their earls,
ith great part of the army,
oured the country for
lunder, while the others
ade a rampart between the
vers Thames and Kennet
on the right side of the same
royal city.

They were encountered by Æthelulf, earl of Berkshire, with his men, at a place called in English Englefield, and in Latin ANGLORUM CAMPUS; both sides fought bravely, and made long resistance. At length one of the pagan earls was slain, and the greater part of the army destroyed; upon which the rest saved themselves by flight, and the Christians gained the victory.

Four days afterwards, king Æthered,
and his brother Alfred,
united their forces and
marched to Reading, where,
on their arrival, they cut to
pieces the pagans whom they
found outside the fortifications. But the pagans, nevertheless, sallied out like wolves from
the gates, and a fierce engagement ensued. At last, grief to say, the Christians

Huntingdon

by reason of their numbers, to advance together, they proceeded in different bands and by different routes. Their leaders were two kings, Basreg and Aldene.

After 4 days, then,

CHARTERS IN 871. 1. ALFRED king of Wessex, II, 96. It is not a contemporary charter, but a Latin translation, of a more modern date. Mr Kemble ascribes it to the twelfth century.

duke
Edelwlf, meeting 2 consuls of the army at Engla-feld, fought and conquered them, and slew one consul named Sidrac.

And after 4 days, king Edelred and his brother with many folk came to Reding and fought with the army; and many fell on both sides, and the Dacians [DANES] were victorious.

Simeon

the West-Saxons, came to the royal city called At Reading, situated on the South bank of the river Thames, in the district which is now called Berkshire by the inhabitants of that country.

On the third day from that on which these enemies of the English came, their earls with a great multitude gallopped along the side of that river, and carried off a great quantity of booty.

Some of them tried to make a rampart between the river Thames and Kennet: but their design, and the work of the Danes was dissipated by the help of the English, that the words of the scholastic poet might be fulfilled:

Though deck'd in Tyrian robes
He shall not shun his fate;
The gems that wreathe his brow
Draw down the people's hate.
&c. &c.

And when those plunderers were setting manfully to their work, suddenly Ethelwlf the vigorous duke of Berkshire came down upon them, surrounded by his squadrons and armed in triple mail. Seeing the multitude of the barbarians, the leader of the Christians said to his men, "Their army is numerous, but yet we may treat them with contempt; for though they attack us with the advantage of more men, yet our commander, Christ, is braver than they." The Christians then meet the Danes, trusting in the protection of the Christian name: the aforesaid duke exhorts his men especially to resist their adversaries, being posted with his legions at a place called Englafeld. Here they fought a fierce battle, in which many fell wounded or were killed on both sides. There fell a prince of the Danes with a great multitude of his army; the others escaped by flight; and the Christians gained the palm of victory and were masters of the place of death.

These things having thus happened, when 4 days from that time had elapsed, the powerful king Ethelred, and his brother Elfred, having assembled large armies, as is the power and the excellence of kings, came to Reding, desiring either to live gloriously in their kingdom, or to die in battle for Christ. And when king Ethelred, powerful in arms, had arrived with his beloved brother at the gate of the fortress, slaying and

Saxon Chronicle | Asser | Ethelwerd 87

And alderman Æthelwulf was slain, and the Danishmen had possession of the place of carnage.

fled, the pagans obtained the victory, and the aforesaid earl Æthelwulf ‖ was among the slain.

time before had obtained th victory: the barbarians last triumph.

‖ MATT. WESTM. calls him Eadulf.

The body of the above-name duke is privately withdraw and carried into the provinc of the Mercians, to a plac called Northworthige, b Deoraby [DERBY] in the la guage of the Danes.

And about four days after this, king Æthered and Ælfred his brother fought against the whole army at Æscesdun [ASDOWN], and they were in two bodies: in the one were Bachsecg and Halfdene the heathen kings, and in the other were the earls.

And then king Æthered fought against the division under the kings, and there king Bagsecg was slain; and Ælfred his brother against the division under the earls.

Roused by this calamity, the Christians, in shame and indignation, within four days, assembled all their forces, and again encountered the pagan army at a place called Æscesdun [ASHDOWN,] which means the "Hill of the Ash." The pagans had divided themselves into two bodies, and began to prepare defences, for they had two kings and many earls, so they gave the half part of the army to the two kings, and the other part to all their earls. Which the Christians perceiving, divided their army also into two troops, and also began to construct defences. But Alfred, as we have been told by those who were present, and would not tell an untruth, marched up promptly with his men to give them battle; for king Æthered remained a long time in his tent in prayer, hearing the mass, and said that he would not leave it, till the priest had done, or abandon the divine protection for that of men. And he did so too, which afterwards availed him much with the Almighty, as we shall declare more fully in the sequel.

Four days after king Æth red with his brother Alfre fought again with all th army of the Danes at Æsce dune [ASHDOWN,] and the was great slaughter on bo sides: but at last king Eth red obtained the victory.

Now the Christians had determined that king Æthered, with his men, should attack the two pagan kings, but that his brother Ælfred, with his troops, should take the chance of war against the two earls. Things being so arranged, the king remained a long time in prayer, and the pagans came up rapidly to fight. Then Ælfred, though possessing a subordinate authority, could no longer support the troops of the enemy, unless he retreated or charged upon them without waiting for his brother. At length he bravely led his troops against the hostile army, as they had before arranged, but without awaiting his brother's arrival; for he relied in the divine counsels, and forming his men into a dense pha-

871 Florence

led, the pagans obtained the victory, and the aforesaid earl Æthelulf was among the slain.

Roused by this calamity, the Christians, in shame and indignation, within four days assembled all their forces, and again encountered the pagan army at a place called Æscesdun [Ashdown,] which means the "Hill of the Ash." The pagans had divided themselves into two bodies, and began to prepare defences, for they had two kings and many earls, so they gave half of the army to the two kings, and the other half to all their earls. Which the Christians perceiving, divided their army also into two troops, and also began to construct defences. But Alfred

Huntingdon

And after 4 days, king Adelred and his brother Alfred fought again at Escesdune, against all their army which had been divided into 2 parts. In one division were the pagan kings Basreg and Aldene, against whom fought king Edelred, and he slew king Basreg: in the other division were the pagan consuls, against whom fought Alfred the king's brother,

Simeon

cutting down the enemy before and behind, the pagans on the other hand cut them down also; resisting with hostile rage. But, alas! oh grief! the enemies of the English that day obtained the victory.

Ethelwlf, also, of Berkshire, who before had raged as a lion in battle, then fell with the rest of the faithful in Christ.

The English people, stung with grief and shame, implored the aid of the angels, that they would deign to grant them the assistance of the divine support.

Again then, after 4 days, they lead their troops against the aforesaid enemies; they seize their arms, and post their legions at a place called Etscesdun, which may reverently be interpreted in the Latin tongue Mons Fraxini "The Ash-Mount." There, famous men, and brave in battle, come forth to fight with all their force and with full good will. The Danes also, cunning as they are, dividing themselves into two bands, fight bravely with their men. They also had two kings and many dukes, who, using caution, gave half of the army to the two kings, and half to all the dukes. The English, perceiving this, themselves also appoint two bodies, and form machines and defences of warriors. But king Elfred goes forth with his legions most readily to battle, knowing without a doubt, that victory would not lie with a multitude of men, but in the pity and mercy of God. King Ethelred, also, was in his tent at prayer, zealously hearing the mass, and the things which are of God. These holy mysteries were of much benefit to the king and the Christian people, as will be shewn in sequel.

Now the Christian people and the English had devoutly

marched up promptly with his men to give them battle; for king Æthered remained a long time in his tent in prayer, hearing the mass, and said that he would not leave it, till the priest had done, or abandon the divine protection for that of men. And he did so too, which afterwards availed him much with the Almighty, as we shall declare more fully in the sequel.

Now the Christians had determined that king Æthered, with his men, should attack the two pagan kings, but that his brother Ælfred, with his troops, should take the chance of war against all the earls. Things being so arranged, the king remained a long time in prayer, and the pagans came up rapidly to fight. Then Ælfred, though possessing a subordinate authority, could no longer support the troops of the enemy, unless he retreated or charged upon them without waiting for his brother. At length he bravely led his troops against the hostile army, as they had before arranged, but without awaiting his brother's arrival; for he relied in the divine counsels, and forming his men into a dense pha-

Saxon Chronicle

and there earl Sidroc the elder was slain, and earl Sidroc the younger, and earl Osbearn, and earl Fræna, and earl Hareld:
and both divisions of the army were put to flight and many thousands slain: and they continued fighting until night.

Asser

lanx, marched on at once to meet the foe.
But here I must inform those who are ignorant of the fact, that the field of battle was not equally advantageous to both parties. The pagans occupied the higher ground, and the Christians came up from below. There was also a single thorn-tree, of stunted growth, but we have ourselves never seen it. Around this tree the opposing armies came together with loud shouts from all sides, the one party to pursue their wicked course, the other to fight for their lives, their dearest ties, and their country. And when both armies had fought long and bravely, at last the pagans, by the divine judgment, were no longer able to bear the attacks of the Christians, and having lost great part of their army, took to a disgraceful flight. One of their two kings, and five earls were there slain, together with many thousand pagans, who fell on all sides, covering with their bodies the whole plain of Ashdown.*

* The site of this place is disputed, but it was probably Ashdown near Wantage.

There fell in that battle king Bægsceg, earl Sidroc the elder and earl Sidroc the younger, earl Obsbern, earl Fræna, and earl Hareld; and all the pagan army pursued its flight, not only until night but until the next day, even until they reached the stronghold from which they had sallied. The Christians followed, slaying all they could reach, until it became dark.

Ethelwerd 871

BROMPTON. When mass was fully ended, the aforesaid king Ethelred hastened speedily into the battle. And although the Danes had pre-occupied the higher position of a mountain, he went up with his Christians from below, and defeated his enemies, and with the lance which he carried in his hand, he manfully slew their king Oseg, and deprived of life another king with the sword which he bore at his side.

But it is proper that I should declare the names of those chiefs who fell there: king Berse [Bagsac], the veteran Sihtrix [Sidroc] their consul the younger Sihtrix [Sidroc] also, the consul Osbearn, the consul Fræna, the consul Harald; and, so to speak, all the flower of the barbarian youth was there slain, so that neither before nor since was ever such destruction known since the Saxons first gained Britain by their arms.

871 **Florence**

lanx, marched on at once to meet the foe.

At length king Æthered, having finished his prayers, came up, and, having invoked the great Ruler of the world, plunged into the fight.

But here I must inform those who are ignorant of the fact, that the field of battle was not equally advantageous to both parties. The pagans occupied the higher ground, and the Christians came up from below. There was also a single thorn-tree, of stunted growth.

Around this tree the opposing armies came together with loud shouts from all sides, the one party to pursue their wicked course, the other to fight for their lives, their dearest ties, and their country. And when both armies had fought long and bravely, at last the pagans, by the divine judgment, were no longer able to bear the attacks of the Christians, and having lost great part of their army took to a disgraceful flight. One of their two kings, and five earls were there slain, together with many thousand pagans, who fell on all sides, covering with their bodies the whole plain of Ashdown.

There fell in that battle king Bagsegc, earl Sidroc the elder and earl Sidroc the younger, earl Osbearn, earl Freana, and earl Harald; and the whole pagan army pursued its flight, not only until the night but until the next day, even until they reached the stronghold from which they had sallied.

Huntingdon

And he slew 5 consuls, Sidroc the elder, and Sidroc the younger, and Osbearn and Frena and Harolde: and their army was put to flight, and many thousands slain; and the battle lasted until the night.

Simeon

made up their minds to wage war bravely against their enemies, and that the brave king Ethelred, should fight with his myriads against the legions of the princes, namely one king of the English against two of the Danes: but king Elfred, with his dukes, fellow-soldiers, satraps, and people, was to take the lot of war, as had been determined, against all the dukes of the pagans.

These things having been arranged on both sides, whilst king Ethelred was delaying a long time in prayer, and the pagans, ready for battle, had come quickly up to the place of deadly strife, Elfred, at that time second in the kingdom, was not able any longer to bear the hostile troops, unless he got the better of them either by battle or by death. On a sudden, starting up in his valour, he rushed with the holy squadrons of the English on the assembled multitudes of the Danes, the king came sheathed in arms and in prayer, who seeing that his brother's army was beautifully drawn up, went forth like a warlike Judas to the battle. They fought on both sides with manly intent, and fell there by fifties, by hundreds, and by thousands. Those who fell for their country, were carried, as we may believe, to the country of eternal happiness: but the others were carried to him of whom it is said, that "He is the head of all iniquity." The kings not only exhorted their brave people with words, but also cut down their enemies with warlike valour. At last the Danes, seeing that the troops of their allies had fallen, were disturbed, were astonished, and were shaken; and boundless fear took hold of them. For the Danes were stricken with terror within their hearts, and no longer able to bear the attacks of the English in the engagement. They took to a disgraceful flight, and throwing away their swords, held out their right hands, and asked for peace. The kings, stretching out their swords, with difficulty appeased their warlike people. The vulgar herd ran this way and that way, and the English people pursued them throughout the whole day. Many thousands were slain on that day, whose death the pious kings beholding, gave boundless thanks to God, who had given them such a palm of victory on that day. There, also, fell king Bergsecg and these dukes with him: that old earl Sidroc, to whom may be applied that saying THE ANCIENT OF EVIL DAYS. There fell, also, duke Sidroc the younger, and duke Osbern, duke Frana, and duke Harald, with their troops, who, choosing the broad and spacious way, went down into the depths of the lake. They knew not the way of teaching nor understood its paths: it was kept far away from their faces.

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd 871
And about fourteen days after this, king Æthered and Ælfred his brother fought against the army at Basing, and there the Danes obtained the victory.	After fourteen days had elapsed, king Æthered, with his brother Ælfred, again joined their forces and marched to Basing to fight with the pagans. The enemy came together from all quarters, and after a long contest gained the victory.	Fourteen days after, they again took courage and a second battle was fought at a place called Basing: the barbarians came and took part over against them; the fight began, and hope passed from the one side to the other; the royal army was deceived, the enemy had the victory, but gained no spoils.
And about two months after this, king Æthered and Ælfred his brother fought against the army at Meretun; and they were in two bodies, and they put both to flight, and during a great part of the day were victorious; and there was great slaughter on either hand; but the Danes had possession of the place of carnage.	BROMPTON. And then from that place [MERTON] a tyrant of the Danes named Somerled, marching as far as Reading, destroyed the city and all he found there. After this, Etheldred king of the West-Saxons fought with him, and having been there mortally wounded died on the 9th before the calends of May [AP. 23] in the 5th year of his reign, and was buried at Wymburn.	Furthermore, after 2 months the aforesaid king Æthered renewed the battle, and with him was his brother Alfred, at Merantune [MERTON], against all the army of the barbarians, and a large number was slain on both sides: the barbarians obtained the victory.
And there bishop Heahmund was slain, and many good men.*	* MATT. WESTM. Hamund bishop of Sherborne, to whom succeeded Æthelhege.	Bishop Heahmund there fell by the sword, and his body lies buried at Cængeshamme [KEYNSHAM]. Many others also fell or fled in that battle, concerning whom it seems to be a loss of time to speak more minutely at present.
And after this battle there came a great 'sumorlida' to Reading.	After this battle, another army came from beyond the sea, and joined them.	10 There came a summer-army innumerable to Reading and were eager to fight against the army of the West-Angles: to their aid also came those who had already long time been ravaging.
And after this, over Easter, king Æthered died; and he reigned five years, and his body lies at Winburne-minster.	The same year, after Easter, the aforesaid king Æthered, having bravely, honourably, and with good repute, governed his kingdom five years, through much tribulation, went the way of all flesh, and was buried in Winborne Minster, where he awaits the coming of the Lord, and the first resurrection with the just.	1 Lastly, after the above-mentioned battle, and after the Easter of the same year, died king Ethered, from whose family I derive my origin.

871

Florence

After fourteen days had elapsed, king Æthered, with his brother Alfred, again joined their forces and marched to Basing to fight with the pagans. The enemy came together from all quarters, and after a long contest gained the victory.

Again, when 2 months had passed, king Æthered with his brother Alfred, fought with the pagans, who had divided themselves into 2 bands, at Meretun, and for a long time were victorious, having routed all their enemies. But they came back to the fight, many fell on both sides, and the pagans, gaining the victory, were masters of the field of death.

The same year, after Easter, the aforesaid king Æthered, having bravely, honourably, and with good repute, governed his kingdom five years, through much tribulation, went the way of all flesh on the 9th before the calends of May [Ap. 23], and was buried in Winborne Minster, where he awaits the coming of the Lord, and the first resurrection with the just.

Huntingdon

Again, after 14 days, king Adelred and his brother Alfred fought with the army at Basing, and the Danes conquered.

Again, after 2 months king Adelred and his brother Alfred fought with the army at Merton, and many fell on both sides, and the Danes, after having long been beaten back, at last conquered.

There was slain bishop Edmund and many nobles of England.

After this battle a great army came in the summer to Reading.

This year, after Easter, died king Adelred, and was buried at Winburnhamminster [Wimbourn-Minster]; he reigned 5 years.

Simeon

When this glorious battle was ended, the kings, and all their people were filled with immense joy, seeing the flight of the Danes and the bravery of the English. After the lapse of 14 days, the excellent king Ethelred, not knowing that the year of jubilee brings with it forgiveness, aided by the trusty help of his brother, got together his army, gathered his spoils, and distributed arms and many gifts to his fellow-soldiers. Those leaders of the people knew for certain that commonwealths will be safe, if those who study wisdom rule them, or if those who rule them study wisdom. Again the Danes and English were gathered together for battle, and when their utmost fury had been put forth, the pagans almost gained the victory.

In the same year, king Ethelred full of years and perfect in goodness, after fighting so many famous battles, began to enjoy the happiness of a future life and everlasting kingdom with the King of all ages in the land of the living.

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd 871
	2 AND NOW I HAVE FOLLOWED UP MY PLAN, DEAR COUSIN MATILDA, AND WILL BEGIN TO CONSOLIDATE MY SUBJECT; AND LIKE A SHIP WHICH, HAVING SAILED A LONG WAY OVER THE WAVES, ALREADY OCCUPIES THE PORT, TO WHICH IN HER PATIENT VOYAGE SHE HAD BEEN TENDING: SO WE, LIKE SAILORS, ARE ALREADY ENTERING, AND AS I BRIEFLY INTIMATED TO YOU IN MY FORMER EPISTLE, SO ALSO IN THE PREFACES TO THIS PRESENT BOOK, AND WITHOUT ANY IMPROPRIETY I AGAIN REMIND YOU, AND THOUGH I CUT SHORT THE COURSE OF THAT WHICH IS VISIONARY, NOT IMPELLED BY NECESSITY, BUT THROUGH LOVE OF YOUR AFFECTION, I NOW SEND YOU AGAIN MORE FULLY TO BE MEDITATED UPON CONCERNING THE ORIGIN OF OUR FAMILY, AND SUFFICIENTLY EMBRACE THE STUDY OF YOUR SINCERITY.	
	3 Thus far then.	
	4 I will now leave obscurity and begin to speak concerning the sons of Athulf. They were five in number: the first was Ethelstan, who also shared the kingdom with his father: the second was Ethelbald, who also was king of the Western English: the third was Ethelbyrht, king of Kent: the fourth was Ethered, who after the death of Edelbyrht succeeded to the kingdom, and was also my grandfather's grandfather: the fifth was Elfred, who succeeded after all the others to the whole sovereignty, and was your grandfather's grandfather.	
	5 Wherefore I make known to you, my beloved cousin Matilda, that I receive these things from ancient tradition, and have taken care in most brief style to write the history of our race down to these two kings, from whom we have taken our origin. To you therefore, most beloved, I devote this work, compelled by the love of our relationship: if others receive them with haughtiness, they will be judged unworthy of the feast; if otherwise, we advise all in charity to gather what is set before them.	
	6 Let us return then to the story that we broke off, and to the death of the above-named Ethered.	
Then Ælfred the son of Æthelwulf, his brother, succeeded to the kingdom of the West-Saxons.	The same year, the aforesaid Ælfred, who had been up to that time only of secondary rank, whilst his brothers were alive, now, by God's permission, undertook the government of the whole kingdom, amid the acclamations of all the people, and if he had chosen, he might have done so before, whilst his brother above-named was still alive; for in wisdom and other qualities he surpassed all his brothers, and moreover was warlike and victorious in all his wars.	7 His reign lasted 5 years, and he is buried in the monastery which goes by the name of Wimborne.
		8 CHAP. III. OF THE REIGN OF KING ALFRED.
		9 After these things, Ælfred obtained the kingdom when his brothers were dead,—he also was the youngest son of king Athulf—over all the provinces of Britain.
And about one month after this, king Alfred with a small band fought against the whole army at Wiltun, and put them to flight for a good part of the day; but the Danes had possession of the place carnage.	And when he had reigned one month, almost against his will—for he did not think he could alone sustain the multitude and ferocity of the pagans, though even during his brothers' lives, he had borne the woes of many,—he fought a battle with a few men, and on every unequal terms, against all the army of the pagans, at a hill called Wilton, on the south bank of the river Guilou, from which	But the army of the Angles at that time was small on account of the king's absence, who at the same time had performed his brother's obsequies, and although their ranks were not full, yet their hearts were firm in their

871 Florence Huntingdon Simeon

The same year, the aforesaid Ælfred, who had been up to that time only of secondary rank, whilst his brothers were alive, now, by God's permission, undertook the government of the whole kingdom, amid the acclamations of all the people.*

Then Alfred his brother, son of Adelwlf, reigned over Wessex.

* Here Florence gives the account of Alfred's youthful years, transferred to page 31.

The aforesaid king being thus removed from this world, Elfred is chosen by the dukes and prelates of the whole nation, and not only by them but by all the people he is entreated to rule over them to do vengeance on the nations, and rebuke the people. When he had thus gained the rule of the whole nation, he always was a brilliant warrior, and victor in all his battles by the smiles of fortune and the agency of Christ.

And when he had reigned one month, almost against his will,—for he did not think he could alone sustain the multitude and ferocity of the pagans, though even during his brothers' lives, he had borne the woes of many—he fought a battle with a few men, and on very unequal terms, against all the army of the pagans, at a hill called Wilton, on the south bank of

And about one month after, he fought with few men at Wilton† against the army, and for a long time drove them back; and after that, the Danes gained the victory.

† BROMPTON says WALTON in Sussex: but MATT. WEST. says "Wilton on the south bank of the river Guilo, from which that province is called Guiltoscira [WILTSHIRE]."

The aforesaid army rebelled against him most fiercely, but, seeing the strength of the English, and knowing their own weakness, they turned their backs in

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd 871
	river the whole of that district is named. And after a long and fierce engagement, the pagans, seeing the danger they were in, and no longer able to bear the attack of their enemies, turned their backs and fled.	breasts, they rejoice in the fight, and repel the enemy; but at length oppressed with fatigue, they cease from the fight. The barbarians hold possession of a sterile field of battle: Afterwards also they spread themselves and ravage the country.
	But, oh, shame to say, they deceived their too audacious pursuers, and again rallying, gained the victory. Let no one be surprised that the Christians had but a small number of men, for the Saxons had been worn out by eight battles in one year, against the pagans, of whom they had slain one king, nine dukes, and innumerable troops of soldiers, besides endless skirmishes, both by night and by day, in which the oft-named Alfred, and all his chieftains, with their men, and several of his ministers, were engaged without rest or cessation against the pagans. How many thousand pagans fell in these numberless skirmishes God alone knows, over and above those who were slain in the eight battles above mentioned.	During their foul domination there were three battles fought by the Angles, besides the battles before-mentioned, and eleven of their consuls, whom they call "earls," were slain, and one of their kings.
And this year nine general battles were fought against the army in the kingdom south of the Thames, besides which, Ælfred the king's brother, and single aldermen, and king's thanes, oftentimes made incursions on them, which were not counted: and within the year nine earls and one king were slain.		
And that year the West-Saxons made peace with the army.	In the same year the Saxons made peace with the pagans, on condition that they should take their departure, and they did so.	Lastly, in the same year the Eastern Angles made peace with them. And the number of years to the encamping of the barbarian army in Reading and to the death of king Ethelred and the succession of his brother Alfred was the seventy-first from the time that Egbert had first consolidated the kingdom, and forty seven from the time that the Mercians and Western Angles carried on civil wars at the place called Ellandune, and king Egbert received the name of victor twenty-six years from the time that the battle was fought in Pedredan [Petherton]; and twenty years after the contest which was waged near the wood called Ockley; and lastly five years from the

871 Florence

the river Guilou from which river the whole of that district is named.

And after a long and fierce engagement, the pagans, seeing the danger they were in, and no longer able to bear the attack of their enemies, turned their backs and fled.

But, oh, shame to say, they deceived their too audacious pursuers, and again rallying, gained the victory, and were masters of the place of death.

Let no one be surprised that the Christians had but a small number of men, for the Saxons had been worn out by eight battles in one year, against the pagans, of whom they had slain one king, nine dukes, and innumerable troops of soldiers, besides endless skirmishes, both by night and by day, in which the oft-named Alfred, and all his chieftains, with their men, and several of his ministers, were engaged without rest or cessation against the pagans. How many thousand pagans fell in these numberless skirmishes God alone knows, over and above those who were slain in the eight battles above mentioned.

In the same year the Saxons made peace with the pagans, on condition that they should take their departure, and they did so.

Huntingdon

In this year were nine pitched battles against the army in the kingdom on the south side of the Thames; besides the assaults which Alfred his brother and the king's generals often made.

And this year were slain 1 king and 9 earls.

And the nobles of Wessex made a truce with the army of the pagans.

Simeon

flight. But, oh shame! they turned again by the rashness of their pursuers, and were provoked again to battle, and, gaining the victory, were masters of the field of death.

In the same year, the Saxons made a treaty of peace with the same pagans, on condition that they should depart from them.

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd 871
		arrival of the pagans in the country of the East Angles. And without long delay, they then went to Reading.
A. 872.	In the year of our Lord's incarnation 872, the twenty-fourth of king Alfred's life,	After a year had elapsed from the time of their coming
Here the army went from Reading to London, and there took up their winter-quarters: and then the Mercians made peace with the army.	the above-named army of pagans went to London, and there wintered.	to Reading, they measured out their camp in the neighbourhood of the city of London.
	The Mercians made peace with them.	But the Mercians ratify a treaty with them, and pay a stipend.
CHARTERS IN 872. 1. WERFRITH bishop [of Winchester] II, 98. 2. ETHELRED duke of Mercia, subscribed by "Burhred rex Merciorum," "Æthelswyth regina" and others. II, 99. It is without date, and may belong to either 872, 873, or 874. 3. WERFRITH bishop [of Winchester] II, 100.		
A. 873. Here the army went into North-humbria, and took up their winter-quarters at Torksey in Lindsey: and there the Mercians made peace with the army.	In the year of our Lord's incarnation 873, the twenty-fifth of king Ælfred, the above-named army, leaving London, went into the country of the Northumbrians, and there wintered in the district of Lindsey.	After one year the barbarians change their position to the neighbourhood of the city of Lindsey in a place called Torksey.
CHARTERS IN 873. none.	And the Mercians again made treaty with them.	The Mercian people renew their treaty with them.
A. 874. Here the army went from Lindsey to Repton, and there took up their winter-quarters, and drove king Burgræd over sea about twenty-two years after he had obtained the kingdom.	In the year of our Lord's incarnation 874, the twenty-sixth since the birth of king Ælfred, the army before so often mentioned left Lindsey and marched to Mercia, where they wintered at Repton.	After the lapse of a year, the barbarians at length remove to a place called Repton, and drive king Burhred from the kingdom beyond the sea.
And subdued the whole country: and Burgred went to Rome, and there remained and his body lies in St Mary's church at the English school.	Also they compelled Burhred, king of Mercia, against his will, to leave his kingdom and go beyond the sea to Rome in the twenty-second year of his reign.	Twenty and two years are enumerated from the time that he first occupied his father's kingdom.
CHARTERS IN 874. none.	He did not long live after his	

874 Florence	Huntingdon	Simeon
872. Died Alhun bishop of the Wiccii; and Werefrith, a nurseling of the church of Worcester, and a man most learned in the Holy Scriptures, was ordained bishop by Æthelred the archbishop of Dover, on the 7th before the ides of June, [JUNE 7] being Whitsunday.*	In the 1st year of king Alfred, the army came from Reding to London, and was there through the winter.	In the year of our Lord's incarnation 872, the 24th from king Elfred's birth, the aforesaid army of the pagans went to London, and there wintered; and the Mercians made a truce with them.
The above-named army of pagans went to London, and there wintered.		
The Mercians made peace with them.	And the Mercians made a truce with the army.	
873. The above-named army, leaving London, went into the country of the Northumbrians, and there wintered in the district of Lindsey.	But, in his 2nd year, king Haldene led the same army to winter in Lindesei at Torcheseige.	In the year 873, the 25th from the birth of Elfred king of the English, the army so often before mentioned, leaving London, went to the country of the Northumbrians, and there wintered:
And the Mercians again made treaty with them.		and the Mercians again made peace with them.
874. The army above mentioned left Lindsey, and marched to Mercia, where they wintered at Repton.	In the 3rd year, they wintered at Rependune [REPTON]. Then were gathered together with him three other kings, Godrun, Oscetin, and Anwend, and they became invincible.	In the year of our Lord's Incarnation 874, the 26th from the birth of Elfred king of the English, the army above-mentioned left the province of Lindsay, and entering Mercia, wintered at Repton.
Also they compelled Burhred, king of Mercia, against his will, to leave his kingdom and go beyond the sea to Rome, in the 22nd year of his reign: he did not live long after his	And they drove beyond the sea king Burhred, who had reigned 22 years over Mercia. But Burhred went to Rome, and dying there, was buried in the church of St Mary at the English School.	Burhred also, king of the Mercians they drove out of his kingdom and compelled to go to Rome, in the 22nd year of his reign. He did not live long to the

* Here Florence places a long account of Alfred's learned men, which will be given hereafter.

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd 874
	arrival, but died there, and was honourably buried in the school of the Saxons, in St Mary's church, where he awaits the Lord's coming and the first resurrection with the just.	The above-named king did not abandon his hope in Christ, but made a journey to Rome and died there, and his body, laid in a worthy mausoleum, reposes in the temple of Christ's blessed mother, which is now called the school of the English.
		They now break the peace, and devastate the lands of the Mercians.
And that same year they committed the kingdom of the Mercians to the keeping of Ceolwulf, an unwise king's thane; and he swore oaths to them, and delivered hostages that it should be ready for them on whatever day they would have it, and that he would be ready both in his own person and with all who would follow him, for the behoof of the army.	The pagans also, after his expulsion, subjected the whole kingdom of the Mercians to their dominion; but by a most miserable arrangement, gave it into the custody of a certain foolish man, named Ceolwulf, one of the king's ministers, on condition that he should restore it to them, whenever they should wish to have it again; and to guarantee this agreement, he gave them hostages, and swore that he would not oppose their will, but be obedient to them in every respect.	At the same time Ceolf possessed the kingdom of the Mercians.
A. 875. Here the army went from Repton: and Healfdene went with some of the army into North-humbria, and took up winter-quarters by the river Tyne.	In the year of our Lord's incarnation 875, which was the 27th of king Ælfred, the above-named army, leaving Repton, divided into two bodies, one of which went with Halfdene into Northumbria, and having wintered there near the Tyne, reduced all Northumberland to subjection.	Lastly after a year, the barbarians divide the kingdom into two parts. Halfdene the leader of the barbarians took one part namely the kingdom of the Northumbrians, and there he chose his winter-quarters near the river called the Tyne, and they ravaged the country there on every side.
And the army subdued the land, and oft-times spoiled the Picts, and the Strathclyde Britons.	CHARTERS IN 875. 1. CEOLWOLF king of Mercia. II, 101. 2. EARDWOLF, subscribed also thus; "Ælfred gratia Dei rex hanc libertatem donationis meæ consensi manuque mea propria roboravi et subscripsi." and by others. II, 102. 3. CEOLWOLF king of Mercia. II. 104.	But they also made frequent wars on the Picts and the men of Cumberland.
And the three kings, Godrum, and Oscytel, and Anwynd, went with a large army from Repton to Grantabridge, and sat down there one year.	They also ravaged the Picts and the Strath-Clydensians. The other division, with Gothrun, Oskytel, and Amund, three kings of the pagans, went to a place called Grantabridge, and there wintered.	Oskytel also, and Guthrum, and Annuth, their three kings, with an immense army, came from Repton to a place called Grantabridge [CAMBRIDGE], and there remained twelve months.

875 Florence

arrival, but died there, and was honourably buried in the school of the Saxons, in St Mary's church, where he awaits the Lord's coming and the first resurrection with the just.

The Danish pirates also, after his expulsion, subjected the whole kingdom of the Mercians to their dominion; but by a most miserable arrangement, gave it into the custody of a certain foolish man, named Ceolwulf, one of the king's ministers, on condition that he should restore it to them, whenever they should wish to have it again; and to guarantee this agreement, he gave them hostages and swore that he would not oppose their will, but be obedient to them in every respect.

875.
The above-named army, leaving Repton, divided into two bodies, one of which went with Halfdene into Northumbria, and having wintered there near the Tyne, reduced all Northumberland to subjection.

They also ravaged the Picts and the Strath-Clydensians.

The other division, with Guthrun, Oskitell, and Amund, three kings of the pagans, went to a place called Grantabridge, and there wintered.

Huntingdon

The Danes then gave the kingdom of Mercia to a foolish king, one Ceolwlf, to keep for their own use. But he took an oath, and gave them hostages that he would restore to them the kingdom whenever they wished it, and that he would be ready to march to their aid, with all the men he could muster.

In the 4th year of king Alfred, the army left Repton and was divided. King Alfdene with one part, went into Northumbria, and was near the river Tine during the winter: and he seized the land and divided it out among his men, and they tilled it two years; and he often plundered the Picts.

But the three kings of the Danes aforesaid with the greater part of the army came to Grantebridge and there remained 1 year.

Simeon

world after his arrival at Rome, because he went to Him who is the true life; and he was honourably buried in the church of St Mary, mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, and ever a virgin, awaiting his second coming, when he shall largely give to the good their due rewards, and deal out their dreadful punishments to the wicked.

The Danes, also, after his expulsion, subjected the Mercian kingdom to their own rule. They gave it to a soldier of that same nation named Ceolwlf, on condition that, whenever they chose, they might have it back again, without deceit, and without harm.

In the year of our Lord's Incarnation 875, the 27th from the birth of king Elfred, the aforesaid army left Repton, and divided itself into 2 parts. One part with Haldene went into the country of the Northumbrians, and ravaged it, and wintered near the river Tyne, and subdued all that nation under its dominion, and they plundered the Picts and the Stretcluttians [Strath-Clyde Britons]. Eardulf the bishop and abbat Eadred, taking the body of St Cuthbert from the island of Lindisfarne, fled from place to place 9 years before the face of the barbarians, with that treasure in their possession.

The other part of that band with Gutthrum, and Oscytel, and Amund, kings of the pagans, came to a place named Grantabric [Cambridge] and there wintered.

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd 875
And that summer king Ælfred went out to sea with a fleet, and fought against the forces of seven ships, and one of them he took, and put the rest to flight.	In the same year, king Alfred fought a battle by sea against six ships of the pagans, and took 1 of them; the rest escaped by flight.	Furthermore in the summer of the same year, king Ælfred came out with his army on board a fleet by sea, and the barbarians met them with seven tall vessels. A battle ensues, and the Danes are routed: the king takes one of their ships.
A. 876. Here the army stole away to Wareham, a fortress of the West-Saxons.	In the year of our Lord's incarnation 876, being the twenty-eighth year of king Alfred's life, the aforesaid army of the pagans, leaving Grantabridge by night, entered a castle called Wareham where there is a monastery of holy virgins between the two rivers Frawn [Frome] and Trent, in the district which is called in British Durngueis but in Saxon Thornsæta, placed in a most secure situation, except that it was exposed to danger on the western side from the contiguity of the land.	After one year, 3 The army which had been at Cambridge made a junction with the western army, a thing which they had not done before, near the town which is called Werham, and ravaged the greater part of that province.
CHARTERS IN 876. None.		
And afterwards the king made peace with the army, and they gave the king hostages from among the most distinguished men of the army.	With this army Alfred made a solemn treaty, to the effect that they should depart out of the kingdom, and for this they made no hesitation to give as many hostages as he named.	4 Also the king ratified a treaty of peace with them and gave them money. 5 But they gave him hostages chosen out of their army,
And then they swore oaths to him on the holy ring, which they never before would do to any nation, that they would speedily depart his kingdom. And, notwithstanding this, that part of the army which was horsed stole away by night from the fortress to Exeter.	And they swore an oath over all the relics, which with king Ælfred were next in veneration after the Deity himself, that they would depart speedily from the kingdom. But they again practised their usual treachery, and caring nothing for the hostages or their oaths, they broke the treaty, and sallying forth by night, slew all the horsemen that the king had round him, and turning off into Devon, to another place called in Saxon Exanceaster, but in British Cair-wisc, which means in Latin, the city of Ex, situated on the eastern bank of the river Wisc, they directed their course suddenly towards the south sea, which divides Britain and Gaul, and there passed the winter.	and made oath to him on their sacred bracelet which they had never done to the kings of the other districts, that they would quickly leave their territories. 6 But they broke the peace andcontravened their engagements, and the following year extended their troops into the province of Devon, where they passed the winter at Exeter.

876 Florence	Huntingdon	Simeon
In the same year, king Alfred fought a battle by sea against six ships of the pagans, and took one of them; the rest escaped by flight.	This year king Alfred fought a battle by sea against 7 ships, 1 of which he took, the others fled.	But king Alfred, consoling himself with a sea-fight, found six ships at sea, and engaging boldly with them took one of them: the others fled in fear.
876. The aforesaid army of the pagans, leaving Grantebrycg by night, entered a castle called Wareham where there is a monastery of holy virgins between the two rivers Frawn[Frome] and Trent, in the district which is called in Saxon Dornsæta, placed in a most secure situation, except that it was exposed to danger on the western side from the contiguity of the land.	The following year, the army of the 3 kings came to Wareham in Wessex.	In the year of our Lord's incarnation 876, the 28th from the birth of king Elfred, the aforesaid army, leaving Cambridge by night, entered the castle which is called Wareham.
With this army Alfred made a solemn treaty, to the effect that they should depart ont of the kingdom, and for this they made no hesitation to give as many hostages as he named.	But king Alfred made a truce with the army and received some of their nobles as hostages.	Whose sudden coming the king of the West-Saxons foreknowing made a treaty with them receiving hostages on the condition that they should leave his kingdom.
And they swore an oath over all the relics, which with king Ælfred were next in veneration after the Deity himself, that they would depart speedily from the kingdom. But they again practised their usual treachery, and caring nothing for the hostages or their oaths, they broke the treaty, and sallying forth by night, slew all the horsemen that the king had round him, and turning off into Devon, to another place called in Saxon Exanceastre, but in Latin, the city of Ex, situated on the eastern bank of the same river, they directed their course suddenly towards the south sea, which divides Britain and Gaul.	And they made an oath to him, which they had never made to any other, that they would speedily leave his kingdom.	
	The next night those of the army who had horses, went away secretly, and proceeded to Exanceastre [Exeter].	But they in their usual manner, not caring for the hostages and their oaths, broke the treaty one night, and turned off to Exeter which is called in British Cairwisc, in Latin Civitas aquarum, [City of Waters.]*

* These notices of the march to Exeter are probably by anticipation: for the Saxon Chron. places it clearly in 877. and Asser, Florence and Huntingdon again notice it, as if under 877.

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd 877
	waves of the sea, fought vainly against them; their bands were discomfited in a moment, and all were sunk and drowned in the sea, at a place called Suanewic. In the same year the army of pagans, leaving Wareham, partly on horseback and partly by water, arrived at Suanewic, where one hundred and twenty of their ships were lost; and king Alfred pursued their land-army as far as Exeter; there he made a covenant with them, and took hostages that they would depart.] ‡	‡ All that is included in brackets from [THIS SAME ROLLO (p. 62) is not found in the earliest MS. of Asser. The narrative is here very much confused and apparently in double.
And they there delivered to him hostages as many as he would have, and swore many oaths: and then they observed the peace well.		The barbarians renew their fraud and offer peace: hostages were given, more than were demanded, to the effect that they would withdraw out of the territories of king Alfred; and they did so.
And afterwards, during harvest, the army went into Mercia, and some part of it they apportioned, and some they delivered to Ceolwulf.	The same year, in the month of August, that army went into Mercia, and gave part of that country to one Ceolwulf, a weak-minded man, and one of the king's ministers; the other part they divided among themslves.	They devastata the kingdom of the Mercians and drive out all the free men.
		They erect their huts in the town of Gloucester.
A. 878.		At the end of that year therefore,
CHARTERS IN 878. 1. ALFRED king of Wessex. II, 105. 2. Another of ALFRED, without date, [II, 106] is referred to some year between 871 and 878.		
Here during midwinter, after twelfth night, the army stole away to Chippenham, and overran the land of the West-Saxons, and sat down there.	In the year of our Lord's incarnation 878, which was the thirtieth of king Alfred's life, the army above-mentioned left Exeter, and went to Chippenham, a royal villa,	this foul mob broke the compact which they had before solemnly made with the Western Angles, and they take up their winter-quarters at Chippenham.

878 Florence Huntingdon Simeon

* Here Florence inserts "King Alfred with many &c." given in p. 63.

* Then the army gave him whatever hostages he asked for, and swore to keep the peace, and they kept it well.

On the approach of autumn, some of the pagans settled at Exeter, some went to Mercia. Part of which country they gave to Ceoluulf, to whose charge they had committed it, as has been stated: part they divided among themselves.

Then the army went into Mercia, and kept part of that kingdom, giving the rest to Ceolwlf.

That wicked army left Exeter.

878.

In the 7th year of king Alfred, when now the Danes were in possession of all the kingdom on the northern side of the Thames, and king Haldene was reigning in Northumberland, and the brother of Haldene was in East-Anglia, and the 3 kings aforesaid were with their king Ceolwlf in Mercia and London and Essex, but to king Alfred nothing was left save the land beyond the Thames; it seemed to the Danes to be a disgrace to them that even this should remain to him.

The army above-mentioned left Exeter, and went to Chippenham, a royal villa,

The 3 kings therefore came to Chippenham in Wessex with a wonderful multitude of men who had lately come from Denmark, and covering the earth like locusts, since no

And going to the royal vill of Chippenham, there wintered.

situated in the west of Wiltshire, and on the eastern bank of the river, which is called in British, the Avon.

And many of the people they drove beyond sea, and of the remainder the greater part they subdued and forced to obey them, except king Ælfred.

There they wintered, and drove many of the inhabitants of that country beyond the sea by the force of their arms, and by want of the necessaries of life. They reduced almost entirely to subjection all the people of that country.

The people were everywhere unable to resist: some of them were driven by the impious wretches over the sea into Gaul.

And he, with a small band, with difficulty retreated to the woods and to the fastnesses of the moors.

At the same time the above-named king Alfred, with a few of his nobles, and certain soldiers and vassals, used to lead an unquiet life among the woodlands of the county of Somerset, in great tribulation; for he had none of the necessaries of life, except what he could forage openly or stealthily, by frequent sallies, from the pagans, or even from the Christians who had submitted to the rule of the pagans, and as we read in the Life of St Neot, at the house of one of his cowherds. But it happened on a certain day, that the countrywoman, wife of the cowherd, was preparing some loaves to bake, and the king, sitting at the hearth, made ready his bow and arrows and other warlike instruments. The unlucky woman espying the cakes burning at the fire, ran up to remove them, and rebuking the brave king, exclaimed:—

King Ælfred was at this time straitened more than was becoming.

Ca'm thee mind the ke-aks, man, an' doossen zee 'em burn?
I'm boun thee's eat 'em vast enough, as zoon as 'tis the turn. *

* This is in the Somerset dialect.

The blundering woman little thought that it was king Alfred, who had fought so many battles against the pagans, and gained so many victories over them.

But the Almighty not only granted to the same glorious king victories over his enemies, but also permitted him to be harassed by them, to be sunk down by adversities, and depressed by the low estate of his followers, to the end that he might learn that there is one Lord of all things, to whom every knee doth bow, and in whose hand are the hearts of kings; who puts down the mighty from their seat and exalteth the humble; who suffers his servants when they are elevated at the summit of prosperity to be touched by the rod of adversity, that in their humility they may not despair of God's mercy, and in their prosperity they may not boast of their honours, but may also know, to whom they owe all the things which they possess.

We may believe that the calamity was brought upon the king aforesaid, because, in the beginning of his reign, when he was a youth, and influenced by youthful feelings, he would not listen to the petitions which his subjects made to him for help in their necessities, or for relief from those who oppressed them; but he repulsed them from him, and paid no heed to their requests.

878 **Florence**

situated in the west of Wiltshire, and on the eastern bank of the river, which is called in British, the Avon. There they wintered, and drove many of the inhabitants of that country beyond the sea by the force of their arms, and by want of the necessaries of life. They reduced almost entirely to subjection all the people of that country.

At the same time king Alfred with a few of his nobles, and some of his vassals, used to lead an unquiet life among the woodlands of the county of Somerset, in great tribulation, for he had none of the necessaries of life, except what he could forage openly or stealthily, by frequent sallies, from the pagans, or even from the Christians who had submitted to the rule of the pagans.*

Huntingdon

one could resist them, they took possession of it for themselves.

Part, therefore, of the people fled beyond the sea, part followed king Alfred, who hid himself with a few men in the marshes, and part submitted to the enemy.

Simeon

But king Elfred in those days suffered many tribulations, and led an unquiet life.

* All writers on English History have had difficulty in finding any account in the Chroniclers of a defeat sufficiently severe to account for Alfred's fugitive condition in the early part of 878. The battle, which caused Alfred's retreat into the marshes, seems to be preserved in the following narrative of John Brompton, but misplaced in 871, and altogether jumbled up with other events.

"When King Etheldred was dead, his brother, who hitherto, during the life of his brothers, had been of secondary rank, succeeded to the entire sovereignty of Wessex in the year of our Lord 872, and he was the first of all the kings of England who received regal unction, which was administered to him, as it is written, by Pope Leo at Rome. That same year the Danes pursued the new king, and came up with him at Walton in Sussex, where King Alfred, in the midst of the fight, fled from the field of battle, and escaped to the wood. From thence he went into Wessex, where he collected all the people of his kingdom, and in a short time had so large an army, consisting of his own subjects and others, that the Danes did not dare to meet him in the field. He then went to attack them in London, where they had taken up their residence: but the Danes, not venturing to give him battle, asked peace of him, and offered to let him choose out of them whatever hostages he pleased, on condition that they should leave his dominions, and never again enter them. On that same day, therefore, the hostages were given, and the Danes leaving London, marched the whole night, and never rested until they reached Exeter, which they surprised and occupied. When King Alfred heard this, he first hanged the hostages, and then followed the Danes with all his army to Exeter. The Danes, hearing that he was coming, abandoned the city and went as far as Chippenham in Wessex; where they did much damage, plundering the country, and expelling the people from their habitations. But King Alfred came upon them there, and bravely encountered them in a battle, where Hubba the brother of Hinguar, and Bruern Bocard, who had first conducted them from Denmark, were both slain, besides many others on both sides. At last the Danes prevailed, and Alfred, who had in too great haste marched against them with too small an army, escaped from the battle in the best manner that he could. The Danes, finding the body of Hubba among the slain, buried it amid loud lamentations, and placed over it a mound, which they called Hubbelowe, as it still is called to this very day in the county of Devon, where it is to be seen.

"When the barons of the counties of Somerset, Wilts, and Dorset, heard of the calamity that had befallen their king Alfred, they all assembled in great force at the place where he was; for they were rejoiced to see him safe and sound, having believed that he was dead. Wherefore the king and the barons immediately took counsel about pursuing the Danes, and galloping after them with an immense army all that night, the next morning at the ninth hour they came up with them at Abendun. Alfred and his men immediately assaulted them, and the battle which ensued was more valorously contested than any they had fought before: but the Danes resisted the English so bravely, that it is impossible to say on which side the loss of life was greatest. Thus the English, after having slain many of their enemies, were now reduced in numbers and broken down by eight battles fought this same year."

In the foregoing narrative the battle of Abendune is probably that of Edandune: and its connection with that of Chippenham is correct, though misplaced by 7 years.

Saxon Chronicle | Asser | Ethelwerd | 878

This particular gave much annoyance to the holy man St Neot, who was his relation, and often foretold to him, in the spirit of prophecy, that he would suffer great adversity on this account; but Alfred neither attended to the reproof of the man of God, nor listened to his true prediction. Wherefore, seeing that a man's sins must be corrected either in this world or the next, the true and the righteous Judge was willing that his sin should not go unpunished in this world, to the end that he might spare him in the world to come.

From this cause, therefore, the aforesaid Ælfred often fell into such great misery, that sometimes none of his subjects knew where he was or what had become of him.

And the same winter the brother of Inwær and of Healfdene came with twenty-three ships to Devonshire in Wessex.

And he was there slain, and with him eight hundred and forty men of his army: and there was taken the war-flag which they called Raven.

In the same year the brother of Hynguar and Healfdene, with twenty-three ships, after much slaughter of the Christians, came from the country of Demetia [SOUTH-WALES], where he wintered, and sailed to Devon, where, with twelve hundred others, he met with a miserable death, being slain while committing his misdeeds, by the king's servants, before the castle of Cynuit, into which many of the king's servants, with their followers, had fled for safety. The pagans, seeing that the castle was altogether unprepared and unfortified, except that it had walls in our own fashion, determined not to assault it, because it was impregnable and secure on all sides, except on the eastern, as we ourselves have seen, but they began to blockade it thinking that those who were inside would soon surrender either from famine or want of water, for the castle had no spring near it. But the result did not fall out as they expected; for the Christians, before they began to suffer from want, inspired by Heaven, judging it much better to gain victory or death, attacked the pagans suddenly in the morning, and from the first cut them down in great numbers, slaying also their king, so that few escaped to their ships.*

5 In the same year arrived Healfdene brother of the tyrant Inguuar with thirty galleys, in the western parts of the Angles, and besieged Odda duke of Devon in a certain castle, and war was stirred up on all sides.

6 The king of the barbarians fell, and eighty decads with him.

7 At last the Danes obtain the victory.

* The ANNALS add here: "There they gained a very large booty, and amongst other things the standard called Raven, for they say that the three sisters of Hungar and Habba, daughters of Lodebroc, wove that flag and got it ready in one day. They say, moreover, that in every battle, whenever that flag went before them, if they were to gain the victory a live crow would appear flying on the middle of the flag; but if they were doomed to be defeated it would hang down motionless; and this was often proved to be so."

878 Florence

In the same year the brother of Inguar and Halfdene, with twenty-three ships, after much slaughter of the Christians, came from the country of Demetia [South-Wales], where he had wintered, and sailed to Devon, where, with twelve hundred others, he met with a miserable death, being slain while committing his misdeeds, by the king's servants before the castle of Cynuit, into which many of the king's servants, with their followers, had fled for safety. The pagans, seeing that the castle was altogether unprepared and unfortified, except that it had walls in our own fashion, determined not to assault it, because it was impregnable and secure on all sides, except on the eastern; but they began to blockade it, thinking that those who were inside would soon surrender either from famine or want of water, for the castle had no spring near it. But the result did not fall out as they expected; for the Christians, before they began to suffer from want, inspired by Heaven, judging it much better to gain victory or death, attacked the pagans suddenly in the morning, and from the first cut them down in great numbers, slaying also their king, so that few escaped to their ships.

Huntingdon

But now that king Alfred had neither land nor hopes of having any, the Lord looked down upon the remains of his people.

For the brother of king Haldene came with 23 ships into Devonshire in Wessex.

But the people of king Alfred slew him with 840 men of his army, and there was taken their standard called the Raven.

Simeon

2 That same year, Inguar and Healfdene, with 23 ships, sallied forth like fierce wolves from the country of Demetia [South Wales], in which they had wintered, after much slaughter of the Christians which they had there perpetrated, and after the burning of monasteries, and sailed to Devonshire, where they were slain with 1200 men by the brave servants of the king before the castle of Cynwith, for many of the king's servants, as has been said, had shut themselves up in that castle as a place of refuge.

And after this at Easter, king Ælfred with a small band constructed a fortress at Athelney; and from this fortress, with that part of the men of Somerset which was nearest to it, from time to time they fought against the army.

The same year, after Easter, king Ælfred, with a few followers, made for himself a stronghold in a place called Æthelingaeg [ATHELNEY].

And from thence sallied with his vassals and the nobles of Somersetshire, to make frequent assaults upon the pagans.

1 Ethelnoth also duke of Somerset lived with a narrow retinue in a certain wood,
2 And they built a stronghold in the island of Athelingay, which seems to have been situated in a marsh.
3 But the aforesaid king fought daily battles against the barbarians.
4 Having with him the province of Somerset only; as others assisted him, except the servants who made use of the king's pastures.

Then in the seventh week after Easter he rode to Ecgbyrht's-stane, on the east of Selwood; and there came

Also, in the seventh week after Easter, he rode to Ægbryhta's stone [BRIXTON] which is in the eastern part of the wood which is called Selwood, which means in Latin Silva Magna, the Great Wood, but in British Coit-mawr.

Meanwhile, after the Easter‡ of that year, king Alfred

‡ March 23, in 878.

to meet him all the men of Somerset, and the men of Wiltshire, and that portion of the men of Hampshire which was on this side of the sea; and they were joyful at his presence.

Here he was met by all the neighbouring folk of Somersetshire, and Wiltshire, and Hampshire, who had not, for fear of the pagans, fled beyond the sea; and when they saw the king alive after such great tribulation, they received him, as he deserved, with joy and acclamations, and encamped there for one night.

And on the following day he went from that station to Iglea, and on the day after

When the following day dawned, the king struck his camp, and went to Ægglea, where he encamped for one night.

this to Ethandun, and there fought against the whole army, and put them to flight,

The next morning he removed to Ethandun, and there fought bravely and

fought against the army that was in Chippenham, at a place called Ethandune, and they obtain the victory.

878 **Florence** | **Huntingdon** | **Simeon**

		1 Having been consoled by an open oracle through St Cuthbert, he fought against the Danes, at the time and place which that saint had ordered, and gained the victory, and ever from that time he was terrible and invincible to his enemies, and held saint Cuthbert in especial honour. But how he conquered his enemies may be seen a little farther on.
	INGULF. Not long after this, the king himself, feigning to be a gleeman, took his harp, and went into the camp of the Danes: where, being admitted into its most private places, he saw all the secrets of his enemies, and, when he had gratified his wishes, he withdrew without being found out and got back safely to Adelyngia.	
The same year, after Easter, king Ælfred, with a few followers, made for himself, a stronghold in a place called Æthelingaeig [ATHELNEY].	King Alfred, then, comforted by this success, prepared a fortress at Ethelingeie [ATHELNEY], and making this his stronghold, often fought against the army, with the help of the Somersetshire folk who lived near there.	But king Elfred, trusting in the Lord God, and accompanied by a few companies of men, made a fortress in a place called Ethelingaige, in which residing with his fellow-soldiers, he often sallied from the fortress, and unceasingly crushed his foes.
And from thence sallied with his vassals of Somersetshire, to make frequent assaults upon the pagans.		
Also, in the seventh week after Easter, he rode to Egbriht's stone [BRIXTON] which is in the eastern part of the wood which is called Selwood, which means in Latin Silva Magna, [the Great Wood].	In the 7th week after Easter, he went to Ecgbrichstan [BRIXTON], on the eastern side of Seleuude [SELWOOD].	At the time of our Lord Jesus Christ's resurrection, he did this. He left the fortress, and gathering his strength, afterwards, when 7 weeks of days and one over had been completed; that is 50 days, he came to Ecgbert's stone, on the eastern side of the forest that is called in English Mucelwood, but in Latin Magna Silva [THE GREAT WOOD], and in British COITMAWUR.
Here he was met by all the neighbouring folk of Somersetshire, and Wiltshire, and Hampshire who had not, for fear of the pagans, fled beyond the sea; and when they saw the king alive after such great tribulation, they received him, as he deserved, with joy and acclamations, and encamped there for one night.	And there he was met by all the men of Somerset and Wilts and those who were left of the Hampshire men, all glad to see him.	There all the people of Somerton, Wilton and Hampton met their beloved king; and, when they saw him, they rejoiced with boundless joy of heart, as if they received him back again from the dead.
When the following day dawned, the king struck his camp, and went to Ecglea, where he encamped for one night.	And the next day he went to Æglea [CLAY HILL].	
The next morning he removed to Ethandun, and there fought bravely and	And from thence the next day to Edendune [EDDINGTON].	The third day after, he came with an immense army to a place called Edderandun,

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd 878
and pursued them as far as their fortress: and there he sat fourteen days.	perseveringly against all the army of the pagans, whom, with the divine help, he defeated with great slaughter, and pursued them flying to their fortification. Immediately he slew all the men, and carried off all the booty that he could find without the fortress, which he immediately laid siege to with all his army; and when he had been there fourteen days, the pagans, driven by famine, cold, fear, and last of all by despair, asked for peace, on the condition that they should give the king as many hostages as he pleased, but should receive none of him in return, in which form they had never before made a treaty with any one.	But after the decision of the battle, the barbarians promise peace, ask a truce, give hostages, and bind themselves by oath.
And then the army delivered to him hostages, with many oaths, that they would leave his kingdom, and also promised him that their king should receive baptism: and that they accordingly fulfilled.	The king, hearing that, took pity upon them, and received such hostages as he chose; after which the pagans swore mereover, that they would immediately leave the kingdom; and their king, Godrum, promised to embrace Christianity, and receive baptism at king Alfred's hands. All of which articles he and his men fulfilled as they had promised.	
And about three weeks after this king Guthrum came to him, with some thirty men who were of the most distinguished in the army, at Aulre, which is near Athelney: and the king was godfather at baptism; and his chrismloosing was at Wedmore: and he was twelve days with the king; and he greatly honoured him and his companions with gifts.	For after seven weeks Godrum, king of the pagans, with thirty men chosen from the army, came to Alfred at a place called Alre, near Athelney, and there king Alfred, receiving him as his son by adoption, raised him up from the holy laver of baptism on the eighth day, at a royal villa named Wedmore, where the holy chrism was poured upon him. After his baptism he remained twelve nights with the king, who, with all his nobles, gave him many fine house.§	Their king submits to be baptized, and Alfred the king receives him from the laver in the marshy isle of Alney. Duke Æthelnoth also purified the same at a place called Wedmore, and king Alfred there bestowed upon him magnificent honors.

§ Ædificia, evidently a mistake for BENEFICIA, gifts.

A. 879. Here the army went to Cirencester from Chippenham, and sate there one year.	In the year of our Lord's incarnation 879, which was the thirty-first of king Alfred, the aforesaid army of pagans leaving Chippenham, as they had promised, went to Cirencester, which is called in	After a year from the time of the pagan army leaving Gloucester, they marched to Cirencester, and there wintered.

879 **Florence**

perseveringly against all the army of the pagans, whom, with the divine help, he defeated with great slaughter, and pursued them flying to their fortification.

Immediately he slew all the men, and carried off all the booty that he could find without the fortress, which he immediately laid siege to with all his army, and when he had been there fourteen days, the pagans, driven by famine, cold, fear, and last of all by despair, asked for peace, on the condition that they should give the king as many hostages as he pleased, but should receive none of him in return, in which form they had never before made a treaty with any one.

The king, hearing their prayer, took pity upon them, and received such hostages as he chose; after which the pagans swore moreover, that they would immediately leave the kingdom; and their king, Guthrum, promised to embrace Christianity, and receive baptism at king Alfred's hands. All of which articles he and his men fulfilled as they had promised.

For after seven weeks Guthrum, king of the pagans, with thirty men chosen from the army, came to Alfred at a place called Aalr, near Athelney, and there king Alfred, receiving him as his son by adoption, raised him up from the holy laver of baptism and gave him the name of Æthelstan, and the loosening of his chrysm was made on the 8th day at a royal vill named Weadmor.

After his baptism he remained twelve nights with the king, who, with all his nobles, gave him many fine houses.

Huntingdon

And there he fought against the army and routed them and followed them to their fortress, and remained there 14 days.

Simeon

and found equally immense bodies of the pagans ready with an immense multitude for battle.

When the sun's bright ra began to shine, the king and al themselves in their warlike ornaments, namely the threefold breastplate of faith, of hope, and of the charity of God. Rising from the ground, they boldly challenged to the battle, securely trusting in the clemency of their Creator, and protected by the ramparts of their king who was standing by them, whose look shone, as that of a shining angel.

The two nations fought through a great part of the day, and their voices, and the clatter of their arms were heard a long way off.

The great Beholder of all things, perceiving the inmost wish of his earthly king, granted to him the suffrage of the angelic power. He at length laid low his enemies and gained the victory, returning thanks to his heavenly Saviour with joy of heart.

And whilst the king was smiling with his bands, the foemen, who remained, mourned with loud cries for the severity of their hunger and of the cold, and for fear of so great a king; they ask for the mercies of peace—they who had always been the enemies of peace.

Then the army gave him hostages, and swore that they would leave his kingdom.

They promise hostages, and hold out oaths in their righ hands.

They also promised that their king should be baptized; and this was done.

For Godrum their prince came to king Alfred and was baptized. Alfred became his god-father, when he had kept him with him 12 days, and he gave him many gifts at his departure.

The king, hearing all this, moved by his in-born clemency, grants all they request.

But their king, named Guthrum, bore witness that he wished to become a Christian, and was royally received under the hand of the most pious king in the purification of baptism. The same Guthrum was tinged with the baptism of Salvation, with 30 other elect men, and the king of the Saxons received him for his son of adoption.

After he was baptized, he remained with him 12 nights in great glory; to whom his spiritual father gave many and unspeakable gifts, and to all who received the faith of Christianity.

879.

The aforesaid army of pagans leaving Chippenham, as they had promised, went to Cirencester, which is

In the 8th year of Alfred, the aforesaid army went from Chippenham to Cirencester, and there passed the winter in peace.

In the year of our Lord's Incarnation 879, the 31st from the birth of king Elfred, the aforesaid army of the pagans leaving Chippenham, as they

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd 879
	British Caer Cori, and is situated in the southern part of the Wiccii,‡ and there they remained one year.	‡ Hence 'Which wood forest' Oxfordshire.
And that year a body of pirates drew together, and sat down at Fulham on the Thames.	In the same year, a large army of pagans sailed from foreign parts into the river Thames, and joined the army which was already in the country. They wintered at Fulham near the river Thames.	
And that same year the sun was eclipsed during one hour of the day.	In the same year an eclipse of the sun took place, between three o'clock and the evening, but nearer to three o'clock.	In the course of the same year the sun was eclipsed.

A. 880. Here the army went from Cirencester to East-Anglia, and settled in the land, and apportioned it.	In the year of our Lord's incarnation 880, which was the thirty-second of king Alfred, the above named army of pagans left Cirencester, and went among the East Angles, where they divided out the country and began to settle.	A year after the eclipse, the aforesaid army struck their tents, and leaving Cirencester went into the country of the East Angles. And pitching their camp, reduced all the inhabitants of those parts to subjection. And it was now fourteen years since the barbarians first wintered in the country aforesaid, and ravaged it.
And that same year the army which previously had sat down at Fulham, went over sea to Ghent in France, and sate there one year.	The same year the army of pagans, which had wintered at Fulham, left the island of Britain, and sailed over the sea to the eastern part of France, where they remained a year at a place called Ghent.	In the same year, when they had reduced the district aforesaid, they went in a vessel to Gaul and took up a position at a place called Ghent. They were the same men who had formerly measured out their camp at a place called Fulham.

A. 881. Here the army went further into France, and the French fought against them: and	In the year of our Lord's incarnation 881, which was the thirty-third of king Alfred's life, the aforesaid army	After a year, they attempt to proceed further; but the armies of the Franks assail them and gain the victory;

881 **Florence**

situated in the southern part of the Wiccii, and there they remained one year.

In the same year, a large army of pagans sailed from foreign parts into the river Thames, and joined the army which was already in the country.
They wintered at Fulham near the river Thames.
In the same year an eclipse of the sun took place, between three o'clock and the evening but nearer to three o'clock.
Dunbert bishop of Winchester died, and was succeeded by Deneulf. This man, if we believe the story, for great part of his life was not only devoid of learning, but was also a cowherd. King Alfred when yielding to the fury of his enemies, and fleeing into the wood, lighted upon this man by chance, as he was feeding his swine.* Perceiving his talents he sent him to be taught letters, and afterwards, when he was better instructed, he made him bishop of Winchester: a thing worthy of great wonder.

Huntingdon

In the same year the foreigners, that is the Wicingi, collected a new army, and remained at Fulenham [FULHAM], on the Thames.

This year the sun was eclipsed.

* See Asser's account of this in page 66.

Simeon

had promised, went to Cirenceastre, which is called in British speaking CAIRCERI, and there they remained the space of one year.
In that same year an immense army of pagans came from countries beyond the sea to the river Thames: and joining the aforesaid band, became their accomplices, as is the way with the wicked.

An eclipse took place that same year between the 9th hour [3 o'CLOCK] and the evening [6 o'CLOCK].

880.
The above named army of pagans left Cirencester, and went among the East Angles, where they divided out the country and began to settle.

The same year the army of pagans, which had wintered at Fulham, left the island of Britain, and sailed over the sea to the eastern part of France, where they remained a year at a place called Gendi, i. e. Ghent.

In the following year the aforesaid king Godrum left Cirencester, and went into East-Anglia, and obtained that land and divided it.

In the same year, the army that was at Fulham crossed the sea, and remained at Ghent one year.

CHARTERS IN 880. 1. ETHELRED duke of Mercia, subscribed also by "Ælfred rex," "Ego Æthelfæd conjunx [i. e. wife of duke Ethelred]," and others. II, 107. 2. ETHELWOLF. II, 106.

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 880, the 32nd from the birth of the glorious king Elfred, the often-mentioned army of the pagans left Cirencestre and went to the East-Angles, and dividing that country began to inhabit it.

The pagans, who wintered in Fulanhame, left the island of Britain, and went on a visit to take villainous knowledge of France; there they stayed one year.

881.
The aforesaid army

In the following year they fought with the French and defeated them.

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 881, the 33rd from the birth of king Elfred, the aforesaid army, mounting on

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd 88
then was the army there horsed after the battle.	went higher up into France; and the French fought against them; and after the battle the pagans obtained horses and became an army of cavalry.	the barbarians were put to flight.

CHARTERS IN 881. None.

A. 882.

Here the army went up along the banks of the Maese far into France, and there sate one year.	In the year of our Lord's incarnation 882, the 34th of king Alfred's life, the above-named army steered their ships up into France by a river called the Mese [Meuse] and there wintered one year.	After a year the aforesaid army passed into the upper districts of the Maese and measured out their camp at a place called Escelm [ASCHLOHA].
And that same year king Ælfred went out to sea with his ships, and fought against the forces of four ships of Danish-men, and took two of the ships, and the men were slain that were in them; and the forces of two ships surrendered to him, and they were sorely distressed and wounded before they surrendered to him.	In the same year Alfred, king of the Anglo-Saxons, fought a battle by sea against the pagan fleet, of which he captured two ships, having slain all who were on board; and the two commanders of two other ships, with all their crews, distressed by the battle and the wounds which they had received, laid down their arms and submitted to the king.	In the same year king Alfred put to sea and fell in with four ships; which he defeated, and destroyed two, the others surrendered.

82 Florence	Huntingdon	Simeon
f pagans went into France; nd the French fought against hem; and after the battle he pagans obtained horses nd became an army of cavalry.		horses, came into the borders of the French, which may appear wonderful, that the enemies dared shew themselves against so brave and warlike a people. Then the French, with unconquerable bravery, sallying manfully from the castles, and towns, cities and towers, were kindled with rage like lions, seeing the nefarious powers of the wicked men come forth, seeing the bad exult with joy and gladness, the good lie sunk in fear, the innocent mourn, the guilty to rejoice. Having taken wise counsel, the bold Frenchmen began a most severe battle with the pagans. At the end of which they returned in triumph: the pagans, having gained horses, gallopped this way and that. In those days many monasteries among the same nation were shaken and desolated. For the brethren, also, of the convent of the most blessed Benedict, taking with them his relics from the tomb where they had been placed in the greatest beauty, they travelled this way and that.
882. The above-named army steered their ships up into France by a river called the Mese [Meuse] and there wintered one year.	In the 3rd year, they went up the Maese into France.	In the year of our Lord's incarnation 882, the 34th from the birth of the glorious king Elfred, the army of pagans drew their ships up the river called the Mese into the country of the Frankish nation, and there wintered one year.
In the same year Alfred fought a battle by sea against the pagan fleet, of which he captured two ships, having slain all who were on board; and the two commanders of two other ships, with all their crews, distressed by the battle and the wounds which they had received, laid down their arms and submitted to the king.	At which time king Alfred took 4 ships in a naval battle, and slew the men who were on board.	In the same year, lastly, Elfred the brave king of the Saxons sustained by the naval battle of his leaders, engaged against the pagan ships by sea. Of which, he, on an equal footing, defeated 2 ships by his powerful valour, and slew all who were in them. When he had defeated them, this prince of princes gave due thanks to the Author of his safety. What then took place I will now relate. After this he severely wounded the princes of the two ships with all their arms, with all their companions, who, helplessly laying down their arms, with bent thighs and suppliant prayers, gave themselves up to the great king, as long as the spark of vital heart should keep alive in them.
CHARTERS IN 882. None.		

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd 883
A. 883. Here the army went up the Scheld to Condé, and sate there one year.	In the year of our Lord's incarnation 883, which was the 35th of king Alfred's life, the aforesaid army went up the river called Scald [SCHELDT] to a convent of nuns called Cundoht [CONDE] and there remained a year.	The next year the aforesaid army entered the parishes on the Scald, to a place called Cundath [CONDÉ;] and there measured out their camp for the winter.
2 And that same year Sighelm and Æthelstan carried to Rome the alms which the king had vowed to send thither. 3 And also to India, to St Thomas and to St Bartholomew, when they sat down against the army at London. 4 And there, thanks be to God, they largely obtained the object of their prayer after the vow.		CHARTERS IN 883. 1. ETHELRED alderman, subscribed also 'Ælfred rex hujus traditionis munificentiam signo sanctæ crucis adfirmo' and by others. II, 110.
1 And Marinus the pope then sent 'lignum Domini' to king Ælfred.	12 He also [POPE MARINUS] sent many gifts on that occasion, among which was no small portion of the holy and venerable cross on which our Lord Jesus Christ was suspended, for the general salvation of mankind.	19 He [POPE MARINUS] sent as a present part of the thrice blessed cross of Christ, who is the salvation of the world.
18 And he sent him great gifts, and part of the rood on which Christ suffered.		
17 Who, at the prayer of Ælfred king of the West-Saxons, freed the English school.	11 It was he who, in love for Alfred, king of the Anglo-Saxons, and at his request, freed the school of the Anglo-Saxons resident at Rome from all tribute and tax.	18 Who also gave freedom to the school of the English, by the appointment of king Alfred.
(5) A. 884. Here the army went up the Somme to Amiens, and there sate one year. 6 This year the benevolent bishop Æthelwold died.	1 In the year of our Lord's incarnation 884, which was the 36th of king Alfred's life.	1 After 1 year had expired, that pestilential army aforesaid removed to the higher districts of the Somme, to a place called Embenum [AMBIANI, AMIENS], and there wintered.
16 And that same year died the good pope Marinus.	10 In the same year pope Martin, of blessed memory, went the way of all flesh.	17 In the same year died the blessed pope Martin.

884 **Florence**

883.
The aforesaid army went up the river called Scaldad, to a convent of nuns called Cundoht [CONDE] and there remained a year.

Aser bishop of Sherborne died and was succeeded by Suithelm, who carried the alms of king Alfred to St Thomas in India, and successfully came back from thence.

2 Pope Marinus.
4 Who also then sent to the aforesaid king many gifts, among which he gave him a no small portion of that holy cross, on which our Lord Jesus Christ hung for the salvation of men.

3 He, for love of and at the request of Alfred king of the Angul-Saxons, kindly freed from all tribute and toll the school of the Saxons living at Rome.

(1) 884.
The aforesaid army of pagans entering the mouth of the river Sunne, sailed up to Embenum, and there remained one year.

11 In the same year pope Martin, of blessed memory, went the way of all flesh.

Huntingdon

In the 4th year the army came to the Scat [SCHELDT] in Cundoet [CONDÉ], and there remained one year.

2 And Alfred sent his alms to Rome, and also to Saint Thomas in India, according to a vow which he had made, when the hostile army wintered at London.

1 This year pope Marinus sent to Alfred a piece of our Lord's cross.

6 Then also died pope Marinus.

Simeon

In the following year, that is in 883, the 35th year from the birth of the most famous king Elfred, that army, not to be named, drew their ships up the river called the Scald, and remained there one year.

Guthred from a slave became a king.
And the bishop's see is restored at Cunkecestra [CHESTER-LE-STREET].

9 He [POPE MARINUS] sent to him [ALFRED] many gifts, among which was a piece of the blessed cross, on which our Lord Jesus Christ hung for the salvation of all mankind.

8 It was he who, for love of the benign king Elfred, set free the school of the Saxons, in the city of Rome, from all tribute.

1 In the year of our Lord's incarnation 884, the 36th from the birth of the famous king Elfred.

7 At that time the prelate Marinus of blessed memory went the way of all flesh, yielding his breath to him from whom it came.

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd 885
(7) A. 885. 8 Here the afore-mentioned army divided itself into two; the one part went eastward, the other part to Rochester, and besieged the city, and wrought another fortress round themselves.	2 The aforesaid army divided into two parts. 3 One body of them went into East France, and the other coming to Britain entered Kent, where they besieged a city called in Saxon Rochester, and situated on the eastern bank of the river Medway. Before the gate of the town the pagans suddenly erected a strong fortress, but yet they were unable to take the city, because the citizens defended themselves bravely, until king Alfred came up to help them with a large army. Then the pagans abandoned their fortress, and all their horses which they had brought with them out of France, and leaving behind them in the fortress the greater part of their prisoners, on the arrival of the king, fled immediately to their ships, and the Saxons immediately seized on the prisoners and horses left by the pagans; and so the pagans, compelled by stern necessity, returned the same summer to France.	2 After a year they divide themselves into two parts: one to Lofenum, [Louvain] the other to Rochester; and they laid siege to those towns. 3 They also construct other smaller camps. 4 Defeat prevails among the inhabitants until the arrival of king Alfred with an army. The foul plague was vanquished, and sought reinforcements..... Some of them made for the sea-coasts. The same year they renewed their league, and gave hostages to the English.
9 And, notwithstanding this, the townsmen defended the city till king Ælfred came out with his forces.		
10 Then went the army to their ships, and abandoned their fortress; and they were there deprived of their horses, and soon after, in that same summer, departed over sea.		
11 And that same year king Ælfred sent a fleet from Kent to East-Anglia, and as soon as they came to the mouth of the Stour, there met them sixteen ships of pirates; and they fought against them, and captured all the ships and killed the men.	In the same year Alfred, king of the Anglo-Saxons led his fleet, full of fighting men, out of Kent to the country of the East Angles, for the sake of plunder; and, when they had arrived at the mouth of the river Stour, immediately thirteen ships of the pagans met them, prepared for battle; a fierce fight ensued, and all the pagans, after a brave resistance, were slain; all the ships, with all their money, were taken.	8 The same year, therefore, the aforesaid king Alfred sent his fleet into the country of the East Angles; and immediately on their arrival, there met them at a place called Stourmouth sixteen ships, which they forthwith ravaged, and slew the captains with the sword.
12 As they afterwards returned home with the booty, a large fleet of pirates met them, and then fought against them that same day, and the Danish-men had the victory.	4 After this while the royal fleet were reposing, the pagans, who lived in the eastern part of England, assembled their ships, met the same royal fleet at sea in the mouth of the same river, and after a naval battle, the pagans gained the victory.	9 The rest of the pirate-crew met them; they ply their oars, their armour shines over the constrained waters, the barbarians obtain the victory.
13 The same year, before midwinter, Carl king of the French died; he was killed	5 In the same year, also, Carloman, king of the Western Franks, whilst hunting	10 The same year died Charles the magnificent king of the Franks, cut off by death

885 **Florence**

885.

The aforesaid army divided into two parts.

One body of them went into East France, and the other coming to Britain entered Kent, where they besieged a city called in Saxon Hrofceastre and situated on the eastern bank of the river Medway. Before the gate of the town the pagans suddenly erected a strong fortress, but yet they were unable to take the city, because the citizens defended themselves bravely, until king Alfred came up to help them with a large army. Then the pagans abandoned their fortress, and all their horses which they had brought with them out of France, and leaving behind them in the fortress the greater part of their prisoners, on the arrival of the king, fled immediately to their ships, and the Saxons immediately seized on the prisoners and horses left by the pagans; and so the pagans, compelled by stern necessity, returned the same summer to France.

In the same year Alfred, king of the Anglo-Saxons, led his fleet, full of fighting men, out of Kent to the country of the East Angles, for the sake of plunder; and when they had arrived at the mouth of the river Stour, immediately sixteen ships of the pagans met them prepared for battle; a fierce fight ensued, and all the pagans, after a brave resistance, were slain; and all the ships, with all their money, were taken.

After this while the royal fleet was returning, the pagans, who lived in the eastern part of England, assembled their ships, met the same royal fleet at sea in the mouth of the same river, and after a naval battle, the pagans gained the victory.

Carloman, king of the Western Franks, whilst hunting

Huntingdon

1 In the 14th year of king Alfred, part of the army which was in Gaul, came to Rochester: and besieging the city, began to make there another fortress: but at the king's approach, they fled to their ships and crossed the sea.

CHARTERS IN 885. ALFRED king of Wessex, II, 112. It is without a date, and is referred to some year between 880 and 885.

2 But king Alfred sent a naval armament from Kent to East-Anglia:

3 Who, when they had come to Stour-mouth, meeting 16 ships of the Wickings, defeated them in battle.

4 But, as they returned victorious and laden with spoils, they met a great host of the Wickings, and engaging in battle with them were defeated.

5 The same year a boar slew Charles king of France, son

Simeon

2 That unworthy army divided itself into two bodies. One of them went into East-France, the other coming into Britain went into Kent [to a city] which is called Rofecester.

3 Before its gate the pagans made a castle, and yet could not reduce the city; for its citizens defended themselves manfully, until king Elfred the defender of all the kingdom came up with a great army. On the arrival of the king, the Danes at once flee to their ships smitten with fear, leaving their fortress and the horses which they had brought with them from France, and the captives which they had taken from France of the same nation.

4 At the same time and in the same year, that same armipotent king directed his fleet full of warriors from Kent to the East-Angles. And when he was come to the mouth of the river Sture, immediately 13 ships of the pagans, prepared for battle, met them, and fighting bravely on both sides, all the pagans were slain, and all the ships and money taken.

5 But those of the Danes who were able to flee, collected their ships from all sides into one, and having joined in a sea-fight with the English, whilst they were sleeping in a lazy slumber, they [i. e. THE ENGLISH] were slain, an unarmed multitude: to whom may well be applied that which we read: "Many shut their eyes, when they ought to be seeing."

Saxon Chronicle	Asser	Ethelwerd 885
by a wild boar; and one year before this, his brother died: he too had the western kingdom: and they were both sons of Louis, who likewise had the western kingdom, and died that year when the sun was eclipsed: he was son of Charles whose daughter Æthelwulf, king of the West-Saxons, had for his queen.	the wild boar, was miserably killed by a large animal of that species, which inflicted a dreadful wound on him with its tusk. 6 His brother Louis [III], who had also been king of the Franks, died the year before. These two brothers were sons of Louis, king of the Franks, who had died in the year above mentioned, in which the eclipse of the sun took place; and it was he whose daughter Judith was given by her father's wish in marriage to Ethelwulf, king of the West Saxons.	before the revolution of one year. 10 After him came his uterine brother who ruled over the western coasts of Gaul. They both were sons of Louis, who had formerly possessed the sole sovereignty: his life had reached its termination during the eclipse of the sun aforesaid. He was son of the great king Charles, whose daughter Ethelwulf king of the English had taken to wife.
14 And that same year a large fleet drew together against the Old-Saxons; and there was a great battle twice in that year, and the Saxons had the victory, and the Frisians were there with them.	7 In the same year also a great army of the pagans came from Germany into the country of the ancient Saxons, which is called in Saxon Ealdseaxum. 8 To oppose them the said Saxons and Frisons joined their forces, and fought bravely twice in that same year. In both those battles the Christians, with the merciful aid of the Lord, obtained the victory.	11 In the course of that year, a great number of barbarians landed and filled the coasts of the Old Saxons. 12 Two battles were fought soon after: the Saxons were the victors, and the Frisons also were present in the contest.
15 That same year Charles succeeded to the western kingdom, and to all the kingdom on this side the Wendel sea, and beyond this sea, in like manner as his great-grand-father had it, with the exception of the Lid-wiccas. Charles was Louis's son; Louis was Charles's brother, who was father of Judith, whom king Æthelwulf had; and they were sons of Louis, Louis was son of the elder Charles, Charles was Pippin's son.	9 In the same year also, Charles, king of the Almains, received, with universal consent, all the territories which lie between the Tyrrhenian sea and that gulf which runs between the old Saxons and the Gauls, except the kingdom of Armorica. This Charles was the son of king Louis, who was brother of Charles, king of the Franks, father of the aforesaid queen Judith; these two brothers were sons of Louis, but Louis was the son of [the great, the ancient, and wise Charlemagne, who was the son of] Pepin.¶	13 The same year Charles the Younger succeeded to the sovereignty of all the western parts of Gaul as far as the Tyrrhenian sea, and, if I may so speak, of the dominions of his grandfather, except the province of the Lidwiccas [Armorica or Bretagne]. 14 His father was Lodvicus, brother of the middle Charles whose daughter was married to Ethelwulf king of the English. 15 Both of these were sons of Lodwicus, namely, Lodwicus was son of Charlemagne who was the son of Pepin.
¶ The words in brackets are supplied from the Annals.		
And that same year the army in the East-Anglia broke the peace with king Ælfred.	In the same year also the army of pagans, which dwelt among the East-Angles, disgracefully broke the peace which they had concluded with king Alfred.	In the course of that year the above-named pestilential crew broke their engagements, and marched in arms against king Alfred.

885 **Florence**

the wild boar, was miserably killed by a large animal of that species, which inflicted a dreadful wound on him with its tusk.

His brother Louis [III], who had also been king of the Franks, died the 3rd year before. These two brothers were sons of Louis, king of the Franks, who had died in the year above mentioned, in which the eclipse of the sun took place; and it was he whose daughter Judith was given by her father's wish in marriage to Ætheluulf, king of the West Saxons.

In the same year also a great army of the pagans came from Germany into the country of the ancient Saxons.

To oppose them the said Saxons and Frisons joined their forces, and fought bravely twice in that same year. In both those battles the Christians, with the merciful aid of the Lord, obtained the victory.

In the same year also, Charles, king of the Almains, received, with universal consent, all the territories which lie between the Tyrrhenian sea and that gulf which runs between the old Saxons and the Gauls, except the kingdom of Armorica.

This Charles was the son of king Louis, who was brother of Charles, king of the Franks, father of the aforesaid queen Judith: these two brothers were sons of Louis, but Louis was the son of [the great, the ancient, and wise Charlemagne, who was the son of] Pepin.*

In the same year also the army of pagans, which dwelt among the East-Angles, disgracefully broke the peace which they had concluded with king Alfred.

Huntingdon

of Louis, son of Charles the Bald, whose daughter Juhet [JUDITH] king Edelwulf had married.

Simeon

6 In that same year a great army of pagans came from Germany into the country of the Old Saxons; against whom warlike men were gathered from all sides: that is, Frisons and Saxons, and fought manfully and bravely: in which two battles the Christian people, by permission of God's merciful piety, had the victory.

* Florence, copying Asser, omits the words in brackets.

Wherefore, to return to that from which I digressed, that I may not be compelled by my long navigation to abandon the port of rest which I was making for, I propose, as far as my knowledge will enable me, to speak of the life and character and just conduct of my lord Alfred, king of the Anglo-Saxons, after he married the above named respected lady of Mercian race, his wife; and, with God's blessing, I will despatch it succinctly and briefly, as I promised, that I may not offend the delicate minds of my readers by prolixity in relating each new event.

His nuptials were honourably celebrated in Mercia, among innumerable multitudes of people of both sexes; and after continual feasts, both by night and by day, he was immediately seized, in presence of all the people, by sudden and overwhelming pain, as yet unknown to all the physicians; for it was unknown to all who were then present, and even to those who daily see him up to the present time,—which, sad to say! is the worst of all, that he should have protracted it so long from the twentieth to the fortieth year of his life, and even more than that through the space of so many years,—from what cause so great a malady arose. For many thought that this was occasioned by the favour and fascination of the people who surrounded him; others, by some spite of the devil, who is ever jealous of the good; others, from an unusual kind of fever.

He had this sort of severe disease from his childhood; but once, divine Providence so ordered it, that when he was on a visit to Cornwall for the sake of hunting, and had turned out of the road to pray in a certain chapel, in which rests the body of Saint Guerir, and now also St Neot rests there,—for king Ælfred was always from his infancy a frequent visitor of holy places for the sake of prayer and almsgiving,—he prostrated himself for private devotion, and, after some time spent therein, he entreated of God's mercy, that in his boundless clemency he would exchange the torments of the malady which then afflicted him for some other lighter disease; but with this condition, that such disease should not show itself outwardly in his body, lest he should be an object of contempt, and less able to benefit mankind; for he had a great dread of leprosy or blindness, or any such complaint, as makes men useless or contemptible when it afflicts them. When he had finished his prayers, he proceeded on his journey, and not long after he felt within him that by the hand of the Almighty he was healed, according to his request, of his disorder, and that it was entirely eradicated, although he had first had even this complaint in the flower of his youth, by his devout and pious prayers and supplications to Almighty God.

For if I may be allowed to speak briefly, but in a somewhat preposterous order, of his zealous piety to God, in the flower of his youth, before he entered the marriage state, he wished to strengthen his mind in the observance of God's commandments, for he perceived that he could with difficulty abstain from gratifying his carnal desires; and, because he feared the anger of God, if he should do anything contrary to his will, he used often to rise in the morning at the cock-crow, and go to pray in the churches and at the relics of the saints. There he prostrated himself on the ground, and prayed that God in his mercy would strengthen his mind still more in his service by some infirmity such as he might bear, but not such as would render him imbecile and contemptible in his

885 Florence Huntingdon Simeon

§ This paragraph, together with those which follow, marked 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, are given by Florence in 871, immediately following the words KINGDOM OF THE WEST-SAXONS, p. 33.

§ 2 Once, divine Providence so ordered it, that when he was on a visit to Cornwall for the sake of hunting, and had turned out of the road to pray in a certain chapel, in which rests the body of Saint Guerir, and now also St Noet rests there, he prostrated himself for private devotion, and, after some time spent therein, he entreated of God's mercy, that in his boundless clemency he would exchange the torments of the malady which then afflicted him for some other lighter disease; but with this condition, that such disease should not show itself outwardly in his body, lest he should be an object of comtempt, and less able to benefit mankind;

when he had finished his prayers, he proceeded on his journey, and not long after he felt within him that by the hand of the Almighty he was healed, according to his request, of his disorder, and that it was entirely eradicated.

1 In the flower of his youth, he wished to strengthen his mind in the observance of God's commandments, but he perceived that he could with difficulty abstain from gratifying his carnal desires and, because he feared the anger of God, if he should do anything contrary to his will, he used often to rise in the morning at the cock-crow, and go to pray in the churches and at the relics of the saints. There he prostrated himself on the ground, and prayed that God in his mercy would strengthen his mind still more in his service by some infirmity such as he might bear, but not such as would render him imbecile and contemptible in his

worldly duties; and when he had often prayed with much devotion to this effect, after an interval of some time, Providence vouchsafed to afflict him with the above-named disease which he bore long and painfully for many years, and even despaired of life, until he entirely got rid of it by his prayers; but, sad to say! it was replaced, as we have said, at his marriage by another which incessantly tormented him, night and day, from the twentieth to the forty-fourth year of his life. But if ever, by God's mercy, he was relieved from this infirmity for a single day or night, yet the fear and dread of that dreadful malady never left him, but rendered him almost useless, as he thought, for every duty, whether human or divine.

The sons and daughters, which he had by his wife above mentioned were Æthelflœd the eldest, after whom came Eadwerd, then Æthelgeofu, then Ælfthryth, and Æthelweard, besides those who died in their infancy, one of whom was Edmund.* Æthelfled, when she arrived at a marriageable age, was united to Eadred, earl of Mercia; Æthelgeofu also was dedicated to God, and submitted to the rules of a monastic life. Æthelweard the youngest, by the divine counsels and the admirable prudence of the king, was consigned to the schools of learning, where, with the children of almost all the nobility of the country, and many also who were not noble, he prospered under the diligent care of his teachers. Books in both languages, namely, Latin and Saxon, were both read in the school. They also learned to write; so that before they were of an age to practice manly arts, namely, hunting and such pursuits as befit noblemen, they became studious and clever in the liberal arts. Eadwerd and Ælfthryth were bred up in the king's court and received great attention from their attendants and nurses; nay, they continue to this day, with the love of all about them, and showing affability, and even gentleness towards all, both natives and foreigners, and in complete subjection to their father; nor, among their other studies which appertain to this life and are fit for noble youths, are they suffered to pass their time idly and unprofitably without learning the liberal arts; for they have carefully learned the Psalms and Saxon books, especially the Saxon poems, and are continually in the habit of making use of books.

* The word Edmund is supplied from Rudborne's Chronicle, a late work.

In the meantime, the king, during the frequent wars and other trammels of this present life, the invasions of the pagans, and his own daily infirmities of body, continued to carry on the government, and to exercise hunting in all its branches; to teach his workers in gold and artificers of all kinds, his falconers, hawkers and dog-keepers; to build houses majestic and good, beyond all the precedents of his ancestors, by his new mechanical inventions; to recite the Saxon books, and especially to learn by heart the Saxon poems, and to make others learn them; and he alone never desisted from studying, most diligently, to the best of his ability; he attended the mass and other daily services of religion; he was frequent in psalm-singing and prayer, at the hours both of the day and the night. He also went to the churches, as we have already said, in the night-time to pray, secretly, and unknown to his courtiers; he bestowed alms and largesses on both natives and foreigners of all countries; he was affable and pleasant to all, and curiously eager to investigate things unknown.

Many Franks, Frisons, Gauls, pagans, Britons, Scots, and

885 Florence Huntingdon Simeon

worldly duties; and when he had often prayed with much devotion to this effect, after an interval of some time, Providence vouchsafed to afflict him with the disease of the fig which he bore long and painfully for many years, and even despaired of life.

3 But, sad to say! it was replaced at his marriage by another which incessantly tormented him, night and day, from the twentieth to the twenty-fifth year of his life and longer.

4 The sons and daughters, which he had by his wife Ealhswith above mentioned, were Ægelfled the eldest, after whom came Eadward, then Æthelgeovu, then Alfthrith and Æthelward. Æthelfled, when she arrived at a marriageable age, was united to Æthered, earl of Mercia; Æthelgeofu also was dedicated to God, and submitted to the rules of a monastic life. Æthelwerd the youngest, by the divine counsels and the admirable prudence of the king, was consigned to the schools of learning, where, with the children of almost all the nobility of the country, and many also who were not noble, he prospered under the diligent care of his teachers;

so that before they were of an age to practice manly arts, they became studious and clever in the liberal arts. Eadward and Alfthrith were bred up in the king's court,

Now there were born to the king sons and daughters sufficiently beautiful and of becoming form, whose names are here gathered; Eadward and Ethelward, Ethelfled and Ethelgifu, and Elfthrid. But Eadward the king's son, and Ealfthrid his sister, were always brought up at the king's court by the great care of their male and female tutors: for they studiously learnt both the psalms and the Saxon books and poems. Ethelward therefore his younger son, was placed in the schools of literary discipline, with many sons of the soldiers, both noble and ignoble. Ethelfled their sister was united in marriage to Eadred prince of the Mercians; their sister Ethelgyfa was placed under the rules of the monastic life.

not without learning the liberal arts; for among other studies of this life, they have carefully learned the Psalms and Saxon books, especially the Saxon poems

5 In the meantime, king, Alfred during the frequent wars and other trammels of this present life, the invasions of the pagans, and his own daily infirmities of body, continued to carry on the government, and to exercise hunting in all its branches; to teach his workers in gold and artificers of all kinds, his falconers, hawkers and dog-keepers; to build houses majestic and good, beyond all the precedents of his ancestors, by his new mechanical inventions; to recite the Saxon books, and especially to learn by heart the Saxon poems, and to make others learn them; and he alone never desisted from studying, most diligently, to the best of his ability; he attended the mass and other daily services of religion; he was frequent in psalm-singing and prayer, at the hours both of the day and the night. He also went to the churches, in the night-time to pray, secretly, and unknown to his courtiers; he bestowed alms most largely, he was affable and pleasant to all, and curiously eager to investigate things unknown.

6 Many Franks, Frisons, Gauls, pagans, Britons, Scots, and

Armoricans, noble and ignoble, submitted voluntarily to his dominion; and all of them, according to their nation and deserving, were ruled, loved, honoured, and enriched with money and power.

Moreover, the king was in the habit of hearing the scriptures read by his own countrymen, or, if by any chance it so happened, in company with foreigners, and he attended to it with sedulity and solicitude. His bishops, too, and all ecclesiastics, his earls and nobles, ministers and friends, were loved by him with wonderful affection, and their sons, who were bred up in the royal house-hold, were no less dear to him than his own; he had them instructed in all kinds of good morals, and among other things, never ceased to teach them letters night and day; but as if he had no consolation in all these things, and suffered no other annoyance either from within or without, yet he was harassed by daily and nightly affliction, that he complained to God, and to all who were admitted to his familiar love, that Almighty God had made him ignorant of divine wisdom, and of the liberal arts; in this emulating the pious, the wise, and wealthy Solomon, king of the Hebrews, who at first, despising all glory and riches, asked wisdom of God, and found both, namely, wisdom and worldly glory; as it is written, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." But God, who is always the inspector of the thoughts of the mind within, and the instigator of all good intentions, and a most plentiful aider, that good desires may be formed,—for he would not instigate a man to good intentions, unless he also amply supplied that which the man justly and properly wishes to have,—instigated the king's mind within; as it is written, "I will hearken what the Lord God will say concerning me."

He would avail himself of every opportunity to procure coadjutors in his good designs, to aid him in his strivings after wisdom, that he might attain to what he aimed at; and, like a prudent bird, which rising in summer with the early morning from her beloved nest, steers her rapid flight through the uncertain tracks of ether, and descends on the manifold and varied flowers of grasses, herbs, and shrubs, essaying that which pleases most, that she may bear it to her home, so did he direct his eyes afar, and seek without, that which he had not within, namely, in his own kingdom.

But God at that time, as some consolation to the king's benevolence, yielding to his complaint, sent certain lights to illuminate him, namely, Werefrith, bishop of the church of Worcester, a man well versed in divine scripture, who, by the king's command, first turned the books of the Dialogues of pope Gregory and Peter, his disciples, from Latin into Saxon, and sometimes putting sense for sense, interpreted them with clearness and elegance. After him was Plegmund, a Mercian by birth, archbishop of the church of Canterbury, a venerable man, and endowed with wisdom; Æthelstan also, and Werewulf his priests and chaplains, Mercians by birth, and erudite. These four had been invited out of Mercia by king Ælfred, who exalted them with many honours and powers in the kingdom of the West-Saxons, besides the privileges which archbishop Plegmund and bishop Werefrith enjoyed in Mercia. By their teaching and wisdom the king's desires increased unceasingly, and were gratified. Night and day, whenever he had leisure, he commanded such

885 **Florence** **Huntingdon** **Simeon**

Armoricans, noble and ignoble, submitted voluntarily to his dominion; and all of them, according to their dignity, like his own folk, were ruled, loved, honoured, and enriched with money and power.

His bishops, too, and all ecclesiastics, his earls and nobles, ministers and friends, were loved by him with wonderful affection, and their sons, who were bred up in the royal house-hold, were no less dear to him than his own; he had them instructed in all kinds of good morals, and among other things, never ceased to teach them letters night and day.

In those times the church of Christ was faithfully and gloriously ruled by archbishop Plegmund, a venerable man, who shone in the fruits of wisdom, being built upon four columns, of justice namely, prudence, temperance, and fortitude.

At the same time, Warfrid with devoutness of heart, was ennobling the rule of the city of Worcester. He it was, who by order and request of the king turned Gregory's book of Dialogues into the Saxon tongue: and sometimes interpreted it most elegantly, sense from sense.

Also Ethelstan and Werwlf were distinguished priests whom he [Alfred] invited to him out of Mercia, because that they were exceedingly and thoroughly superior in the learning of the divine law: he loved and honoured them with especial love; and by their learning and erudi-

* This passage with the 3 following, is given in Florence in 872.

* He [Werfrith] by the king's command, first turned the books of the Dialogues of pope Gregory from Latin into Saxon, with clearness and elegance. He and in process of time Plegmund, a Mercian by birth, archbishop of the church of Canterbury, a venerable man, and endowed with wisdom; Æthelstan also, and Werewulf his priests, Mercians by birth, and erudite, had been invited out of Mercia by king Ælfred, who exalted them with many honours and powers to help him in gaining the learning which he so longed for.

3 By their teaching and wisdom the king's desires increased unceasingly, and were gratified.

men as these to read books to him, for he never suffered himself to be without one of them, wherefore he possessed a knowledge of every book, though of himself he could not yet understand anything of books, for he had not yet learned to read any thing.

But the king's commendable avarice could not be gratified even in this; wherefore he sent messengers beyond the sea to Gaul, to procure teachers, and he invited from thence Grimbald,* priest and monk, a venerable man, and good singer, adorned with every kind of ecclesiastical discipline and good morals, and most learned in holy scripture. He also obtained from thence John,† also priest and monk, a man of most energetic talents, and learned in all kinds of literary science, and skilled in many other arts. By the teaching of these men the king's mind was much enlarged, and he enriched and honoured them with much influence.

In these times, I also came into Saxony out of the furthest western coasts of Britain‡; and when I had proposed to go to him through many intervening provinces, I arrived in the country of the Saxons, who live on the right hand, which in Saxon is called Sussex, under the guidance of some of that nation; and there I first saw him in the royal vill, which is called Dene.¶ He received me with kindness, and among other familiar conversation, he asked me eagerly to devote myself to his service and become his friend, to leave every thing which I possessed on the left, or western bank of the Severn, and he promised he would give more than an equivalent for it in his own dominions. I replied that I could not incautiously and rashly promise such things; for it seemed to me unjust, that I should leave those sacred places in which I had been bred, educated, and crowned,‖ and at last ordained, for the sake of any earthly honour and power, unless by compulsion. Upon this, he said, "If you cannot accede to this, at least, let me have your service in part: spend six months of the year with me here, and the other six in Britain." To this I replied, "I could not even promise that easily or hastily without the advice of my friends." At length, however, when I perceived that he was anxious for my services, though I knew not why, I promised him that, if my life was spared, I would return to him after six months, with such a reply as should be agreeable to him as well as advantageous to me and mine. With this answer he was satisfied, and when I had given him a pledge to return at the appointed time, on the fourth day we left him and returned on horseback towards our own country.

After our departure, a violent fever seized me in the city of Winchester, where I lay for twelve months and one week, night and day, without hope of recovery. At the appointed time, therefore, I could not fulfil my promise of visiting him and he sent messengers to hasten my journey, and to inquire the cause of my delay. As I was unable to ride to him, I sent a second messenger to tell him the cause of my delay, and assure him that, if I recovered from my infirmity, I would fulfil what I had promised. My complaint left me, and by the advice and consent of all my friends, for the benefit of that holy place, and of all who dwelt therein, I did as I had promised to the king, and devoted myself to his service, on the condition that I should remain with him six months in every year, either continuously, if I could spend six months with him at once, or alternately, three months in Britain and three in Saxony.§ For my friends hoped that they should sustain less tribulation and

* Grimbald was provost of St Omer's.

† John had been connected with the monastery of Corbie.

‡ i. e. Wales.

¶ East Dene [or Dean] and West Dene are two villages near Chichester. There are also other villages of the same name near East-Bourne.

‖ This expression alludes to the tonsure, which was undergone by those who became clerks.

§ The original Latin continues, "Et illa adjuvaretur per rudimenta Sancti Degui in omni causa, tamen pro viribus," which I do not understand, and therefore cannot translate.

885 Florence

Huntingdon

Simeon

tion that pacific king was magnified above all the kings of the earth.

1. He also sent messengers beyond the sea to Gaul, to procure teachers, and he invited from thence, Grimbald, priest and monk, a venerable man, and good singer, adorned with every kind of ecclesiastical discipline and good morals, and most learned in holy scripture. He also obtained from thence John, also priest and monk, a man of most energetic talents.

2 Asser also came into Saxony out of the furthest western coasts of Britain, from the monastery of St Dewi.

harm from king Hemeid, * who often plundered that monastery and the parish of St Deguus, † and sometimes expelled the prelates, as they expelled archbishop Novis, ‡ my relation, and myself; if in any manner I could secure the notice and friendship of the king.

* A petty prince of South Wales.

† Or St Dewi. Probably by the parish of St Deguus is meant the diocese of St David's. Hence it is said, that Alfred gave to Asser the whole parish (omnis parochia) of Exeter.

‡ Archbishop of St David's.

At that time, and long before, all the countries on the right hand side of Britain belonged to king Alfred and still belong to him. For instance, king Hemeid, with all the inhabitants of the region of Demetia, compelled by the violence of the six sons of Rotri, had submitted to the dominion of the king. Houil also, son of Ris, king of Gleguising, and Brochmail and Fernmail, sons of Mouric, kings of Gwent, compelled by the violence and tyranny of earl Eadred and of the Mercians, of their own accord sought king Alfred, that they might enjoy his government and protection from him against their enemies. Helised, also, son of Teudyr, king of Brecon, compelled by the force of the same sons of Rotri, of his own accord sought the government of the aforesaid king; and Anaraut, son of Rotri, with his brothers, at length abandoning the friendship of the Northumbrians, from which he received no good but harm, came into king Alfred's presence and eagerly sought his friendship. The king received him honourably, admitted him as his son by confirmation from the bishop's hand, and presented him with many gifts. Thus he became subject to the king with all his people, on the same condition, that he should be obedient to the king's will in all respects, in the same way as Æthered with the Mercians.

Nor was it in vain that all these princes gained the friendship of the king. For those who desired to augment their worldy power, obtained power; those who desired money, gained money; and in like way, those who desired his friendship, or both money and friendship, succeeded in getting what they wanted. But all of them gained his love and guardianship and defence from every quarter, even as the king with his men could protect himself.

When therefore I had come into his presence at the royal vill, called Leonaford, I was honourably received by him, and remained that time with him at his court eight months; during which I read to him whatever books he liked, and such as we had at hand; for this is his most usual custom, both night and day, amid his many other occupations of mind and body, either himself to read books, or to listen whilst others read them. And when I frequently asked his leave to depart, and could in no way obtain it, at length when I had made up my mind by all means to demand it, he called me to him at twilight, on Christmas eve, and gave me two letters, in which was a long list of all the things which were in two monasteries, called in Saxon, Angresbury ¶ and Banuwille; ‖ and on that same day he delivered to me those two monasteries with all the things that were in them, and a silken pall of great value, and a load for a strong man of incense, adding these words, that he did not give me these trifling presents, because he was unwilling hereafter to give me greater; for in the course of time he unexpectedly gave me Exeter, with all the diocese which belonged to him in Saxony § and in Cornwall, besides gifts every day without number in every kind of worldly wealth, which it would be too long to enumerate here, lest they should make my reader tired. But let no one suppose that I have mentioned these presents in this place for the sake of glory or flattery, or to obtain greater honour. I call God to witness, that I have

¶ One MS. has Cungresbury—a place near Banwell.

‖ Banwell in Somersetshire.

§ Wessex.

885 Florence Huntingdon Simeon

FLORENCE, HUNTINGDON, AND SIMEON ARE SILENT ON THE SUBJECT OF ASSER'S INTRODUCTION TO KING ALFRED, AND THE INTERESTING CONVERSATION WHICH TOOK PLACE BETWEEN THE TWO ON THAT AND OTHER SUBSEQUENT OCCASIONS.

not done so; but that I might certify to those who are ignorant, how profuse he is in giving. He then at once gave me permission to ride to those two rich monasteries and afterwards to return to my own country.

A. 886.
Here the army, which before had drawn eastward, went westward again, and thence up the Seine, and there took up their winter quarters near the town of Paris.

In the year of our Lord's incarnation, 886, which was the thirty-eighth since the birth of Ælfred, the army so often beforementioned again fled the country, and went into the country of the Western Franks, directing their ships to the river called the Seine, and sailed up it as far as the city of Paris, and there they wintered and measured out their camp. They besieged that city a whole year, as far as the bridge, that they might prevent the inhabitants from making use of it; for the city is situated on a small island in the middle of the river; but by the merciful favour of God, and the brave defence of the citizens, the army could not force their way inside the walls.

Lastly, after a year, they went to the lower parts of Gaul, and fixed on a place to winter near the river Seine.

That same year king Ælfred repaired London; and all the English submitted to him, except those who were under the bondage of the Danishmen; and then he committed the town to the care of alderman Æthered.

In the same year, Ælfred, king of the Anglo-Saxons, after the burning of cities and the slaying of the people, honourably rebuilt the city of London, and made it again habitable. He gave it into the custody of his son-in-law, Æthered, earl of Mercia.

To which king all the Angles and Saxons, who before had been dispersed everywhere, or were in captivity with the pagans, voluntarily turned and submitted themselves to his dominion.

Meanwhile, the city of London was besieged by king Ælfred.
Whom no civil discord could subdue, either by cunning or by force: all men received him as a saviour, and particularly the Saxons—except the barbarians, and those who were then held prisoners in their hands.
Also, after his army was strengthened, Æthred was appointed leader there by the aforesaid king, to guard the citadel.

* [In the same year there arose a foul and deadly discord at Oxford, between Grymbold, with those learned men whom he had brought with him, and the old scholars whom he had found there, who, on his arrival, refused altogether to embrace the laws, modes, and forms of prælection instituted by the same Grymbold. During three years there had been no great dissension between them, but there was a secret enmity which afterwards broke out with great atrocity, clearer than the light itself. To appease this quarrel, that invincible king Ælfred, having been informed of the strife by a messenger from Grymbold, went to Oxford to put an end to the controversy, and endured much trouble in hearing the arguments and complaints which were brought forwards on both sides. The substance of the dispute was this: the old scholars con-

* The whole of this paragraph concerning Oxford is thought to be an interpolation, because it is not known to have existed in more than one MS. copy.

886 Florence Huntingdon Simeon

886.

The army of pagans so often beforementioned again left East France, and went into the country of the Western Franks,
into the river called the Seine, and sailed up it as far as the city of Paris, and there they wintered.
They besieged that city a whole year, but by the merciful favour of God,
the army
could not force their way inside the walls.

In the following year, the army of the Danes came up the Seine to the bridge at Paris, and there wintered.

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 886, the 38th from the birth of the glorious king Elfred, that army of Danes not to be named came again into the country of the Western French, and came to land in the river called Sigene [Seine]. They also went to Paris, and wintered there, cutting off the thoroughfare of the bridge from the inhabitants. But by the true support of God, and the valour of the citizens in defending themselves, they could not break into that fortress.

In the same year Ælfred, king of the Anglo-Saxons, after the burning of cities and the slaying of the people, honourably rebuilt the city of London, and made it again habitable. He gave it into the custody of his son-in-law, Æthered, earl of Mercia.
To which king all the Angles and Saxons, who before had been dispersed everywhere, or were in captivity with the pagans, voluntarily turned and submitted themselves to his dominion.

King Alfred besieged London, because a great force of Danes had pursued the French army.
All the English at once submitted to him and admitted him; for the Danes had fled.
But the king gave the city into the care of duke Ædred.

At the same time the king of the English, after the burning of cities, and the slaughter of people, honourably rebuilt and made habitable the great city of London, which he gave into the ward of Ethelred the illustrious duke of the Mercians. But all men, both Angles and Saxons, who had before been dispersed here and there with the pagans or set free from captivity, came freely into the king's presence, submitting themselves voluntarily to his dominion. And he, as he was of a most merciful mind, indulged to all the patronage of his benignity.

Saxon Chronicle **Asser** **Ethelwerd** 886

tended, that literature had flourished at Oxford before the coming of Grymbold, although the number of scholars was smaller than in ancient times, because many had been driven away by the cruelty and tyranny of the pagans. They also proved and showed, by the undoubted testimony of ancient annals, that the orders and institutions of that place had been sanctioned by certain pious and learned men, as for instance by Saint Gildas, Melkinus, Nennius, Kentigern, and others, who had all grown old there in literature, and happily administered everything there in peace and concord; and also, that Saint Germanus had come to Oxford, and stopped there half a year, at the time when he went through Britain to preach against the Pelagian heresy; he wonderfully approved of the customs and institutions above-mentioned. The king, with unheard of humility, listened to both sides carefully, and exhorted them again and again with pious and wholesome admonitions to cherish mutual love and concord. He therefore left them with this decision, that each party should follow their own counsel, and preserve their own institutions. Grymbold, displeased at this, immediately departed to the monastery at Winchester,* which had been recently founded by king Ælfred, and ordered a tomb to be carried to Winchester, in which he proposed, after this life, that his bones should be laid in the vault which had been made under the chancel of St Peter's church in Oxford; which church the same Grymbold had built from its foundations, of stone polished with great care.]

* Hyde Abbey.

A. 887.
Here the army went up through the bridge at Paris, and thence up along the Seine as far as the Marne, and thence up the Marne to Chezy, and then sat down, there, and on the Yonne, two winters in the two places.

In the year of our Lord's incarnation 887, which was the thirty-ninth of king Ælfred's life, the above mentioned army of the pagans, leaving the city of Paris uninjured, because they could not succeed against it, sailed up the river Seine under the bridge, until they reached the mouth of the river Materne [MARNE]; where they left the Seine, and, following for a long time the course of the Marne, at length, but not without much labour, they arrived at a place called Caziei, a royal vill, where they wintered one year.†

‡ Here follows the sentence IN THE FOLLOWING YEAR &c. given under 888 at the end of Asser.

Now the army, which were at that time ravaging the country of Gaul, cut their way through the bridge of the citadel of Paris, and devastated the whole country along the Seine, as far as the Marne, and above its vertex, as far as Catsig [CHEZY], where they thrice fixed their winter quarters.

And that same year Charles king of the French died; and six weeks before he died, Earnulf his brother's son bereaved him of the kingdom.

In the same year Charles, king of the Franks, went the way of all flesh; but Arnulf, his brother's son, six weeks before he died, had expelled him from his kingdom. After his death five kings were

In the same year also died Charles, king of the Franks, and his cousin Arnulf succeeded to the kingdom, seven weeks before his uncle's death.

887 Florence Huntingdon Simeon

887.

The above mentioned army of the pagans, leaving the city of Paris uninjured, because they could not otherwise provide for themselves, sailed up the river Seine under the bridge, until they reached the mouth of the river Materne [Marne]; where they left the Seine, and, following for a long time the course of the Marne, at length, but not without much labour, they arrived at a place called Chezy, i. e. a royal vill, where they wintered one year.

In the following year, the army, leaving the bridge at Paris, went up the Seine as far as the Marne, and up the Marne as far as Cadzi, and they dwelt there and in Ionne* two years.

* Noticed more fully by the other chroniclers: see in 888.

6 In the year of our Lord's incarnation 887, the 39th from the birth of the illustrious king Elfred, the aforesaid army, leaving that city of Paris, came to the Seine, thence to the mouth of the river called the Materre and then to a place called Caziei, i. e. a royal vill: in which place they wintered a whole year.

In the same year Charles, king of the Franks, went the way of all flesh; but Arnulf, his brother's son, six weeks before he died, had expelled him from his kingdom. After his death five kings were

Saxon Chronicle

And then was that kingdom divided into five, and five kings were consecrated thereto. This, however, was done by permission of Earnulf: and they said that they would hold it from his hand, because none of them on the father's side was born thereto except him alone. Earnulf then dwelt in the land east of the Rhine: and Rothulf then succeeded to the middle kingdom, and Oda to the western part, and Beorngar and Witha to the land of the Lombards and to the lands on that side of the mountain: and that they held in great discord, and fought two general battles, and oft and many times laid waste the land, and each repeatedly drove out the other.

And that same year that the army went up beyond the bridge at Paris, alderman Æthelhelm carried the alms of the West-Saxons and of king Ælfred to Rome.

Asser

appointed, and the kingdom was split into five parts; but the principal rank in the kingdom justly and deservedly devolved on Earnulf, save only that he committed an unworthy offence against his uncle. The other four kings promised fidelity and obedience to Earnulf, as was proper; for none of these four kings was hereditary on his father's side in his share of the kingdom, as was Earnulf; therefore, though the five kings were appointed immediately on the death of Charles, yet the empire remained in the hands of Earnulf.

Such, then, was the division of the kingdom; Earnulf received the countries on the east of the river Rhine; Hroththwlf [Rodulf] the inner parts of the kingdom; Oda the western part; Beorngar and Witha [Guido], Lombardy, and those countries which are in that part of the mountains; but they did not keep these large dominions in peace, for they twice fought a pitched battle, and often mutually ravaged their kingdoms, and drove each other out of their dominions.

In the same year in which that [pagan] army left Paris and went to Chezy, Æthelhelm, earl of Wiltshire, carried to Rome the alms of king Ælfred and of the Saxons.

In the same year also Ælfred, king of the Anglo-Saxons, so often before mentioned, by divine inspiration, began, on one and the same day, to read and to interpret; but that I may explain this more fully to those who are ignorant, I will relate the cause of this long delay in beginning.

On a certain day we were both of us sitting in the king's chamber, talking on all kinds of subjects as usual, and it happened that I read to him a quotation out of a certain book. He heard it attentively with both his ears, and addressed me with a thoughtful mind, showing me at the same moment a book which he carried in his bosom, wherein the daily courses and psalms, and prayers which he had read in his youth, were written, and he commanded me to write the same quotation in that book. Hearing this, and perceiving

Chronicle 887

The kingdom was then divided into five, and so many kings in the same: but all things are done by the permission of King Earnulf, and they promised to be all under his subjection, because they were not like him, descended from the paternal stock;

and he lived after this on the eastern side of the river Rhine.

But Hrodulf occupied the middle parts of the kingdom, Odda the western parts, and Beorngar with Vuitha held the kingdom of the Lombards from the division of the Jovian mountain [Mount St Bernard]. There they began a civil war; people assailed people; the lands of both were continually disturbed, nor was there any hope of quiet.

The same year, in which the barbarians had settled on the bridge of Paris, duke Æthelhelm received no small part of the money paid from the diocese of the English by the king for the people, and went to Rome.

887 Florence

appointed, and the kingdom was split into five parts; but the principal rank in the kingdom justly and deservedly devolved on Arnulf, save only that he committed an unworthy offence against his uncle. The other four kings promised fidelity and obedience to Arnulf, as was proper; for none of these four kings was hereditary on his father's side in his share of the kingdom, as was Arnulf; therefore, though the five kings were appointed immediately on the death of Charles, yet the empire remained in the hands of Arnulf.

Such then was the division of the kingdom; Arnulf received the countries on the east of the river Rhine; Herothulf [Rodulf] the inner parts of the kingdom; Oda the western part; Beorngar and Witha [Guido], Lombardy, and those countries which are in that part of the mountains; but they did not keep these large dominions in peace, for they twice fought a pitched battle, and often mutually ravaged their kingdoms, and drove each other out of their dominions.

In the same year Athelm, earl of Wiltshire, carried to Rome the alms of king Ælfred and of the Saxons.

Huntingdon

About this time by the factiousness of Ernulf, five kings were made in France.

Simeon

In the same year also Ælfred king of the Anglo-Saxons so often before mentioned, by divine inspiration, began, on one and the same day, to read and to interpret.

8 At this time, also, Elfred king of the Saxons inspired by the gift of God, was able to read and interpret the sacred writings.

his ingenuous benevolence, and devout desire of studying the words of divine wisdom, I gave, though in secret, boundless thanks to Almighty God, who had implanted such a love of wisdom in the king's heart. But I could not find any empty space in that book wherein to write the quotation, for it was already full of various matters; wherefore I made a little delay, principally that I might stir up the bright intellect of the king to a higher acquaintance with the divine testimonies. Upon his urging me to make haste and write it quickly, I said to him, "Are you willing that I should write that quotation on some leaf apart? For it is not certain whether we shall not find one or more other such extracts which will please you; and if that should so happen, we shall be glad that we have kept them apart." "Your plan is good," said he, and I gladly made haste to get ready a sheet, in the beginning of which I wrote what he bade me; and on that same day, I wrote therein, as I had anticipated, no less than three other quotations which pleased him; and from that time we daily talked together, and found out other quotations which pleased him, so that the sheet became full, and deservedly so; according as it is written, "The just man builds upon a moderate foundation, and by degrees passes to greater things." Thus, like a most productive bee, he flew here and there, asking questions as he went, until he had eagerly and unceasingly collected many various flowers of divine Scripture, with which he thickly stored the cells of his mind.

Now when that first quotation was copied, he was eager at once to read, and to interpret in Saxon, and then to teach others; even as we read of that happy robber, who recognized his Lord, aye, the Lord of all men, as he was hanging on the blessed cross, and saluting him with his bodily eyes only, because elsewhere he was all pierced with nails, cried, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom!" for it was only at the end of his life that he began to learn the rudiments of the Christian faith. But the king, inspired by God, began to study the rudiments of divine Scripture on the sacred solemnity of St Martin [Nov. 11], and he continued to learn the flowers collected by certain masters, and to reduce them into the form of one book, as he was then able, although mixed one with another, until it became almost as large as a psalter. This book he called his ENCHIRIDION or MANUAL [HAND-BOOK], because he carefully kept it at hand day and night, and found, as he told me, no small consolation therein.

But as has already been written by a certain wise man,

> Of watchful minds are they whose pious care
> It is to govern well,

so must I be watchful, in that I just now drew a kind of comparison or similarity, though in dissimilar manner, between that happy robber and the king; for the cross is hateful to every one, wherever there is suffering. But what can he do, if he cannot save himself or escape thence? or by what art can he remain there and improve his cause? He must therefore, whether he will or no, endure with pain and sorrow that which he is suffering.

Now the king was pierced with many nails of tribulation, though placed in the royal seat; for from the twentieth year of his age to the present year, which is his 45th,* he has been constantly afflicted with most severe attacks of an unknown complaint, so that he has not a moment's ease either

* This must consequently have been written in A. D. 893.

887 Florence Huntingdon Simeon

Namely on the holy feast day of St Martin bishop of Tours.

Now the king was pierced with many nails of tribulation; though placed in the royal seat; for from the twentieth year of his age, as we have said, to his 45th and more, he was constantly afflicted with most severe attacks of an unknown complaint, so that he had not a moment's ease either from suffering the pain which it causes, or from the gloom

9 He was afflicted with many tribulations of this world, notwithstanding that he was placed in kingly power.

from suffering the pain which it causes, or from the gloom which is thrown over him by the apprehension of its coming. Moreover, the constant invasions of foreign nations, by which he was continually harassed by land and sea, without any interval of rest, were a just cause of disquiet. What shall I say of his repeated expeditions against the pagans, his wars, and incessant occupations of government? Of the daily embassies sent to him by foreign nations, from the Tyrrhenian sea to the farthest end of Ireland?† For we have seen and read letters, accompanied with presents, which were sent to him by Abel the patriarch of Jerusalem. What shall I say of the cities and towns which he restored, and of others which he built, where none had been before? of the royal halls and chambers, wonderfully erected by his command, with stone and wood? of the royal vills constructed of stone, removed from their old site, and handsomely rebuilt by the king's command in more fitting places? Besides the disease above mentioned, he was disturbed by the quarrels of his friends, who would voluntarily endure little or no toil, though it was for the common necessity of the kingdom; but he alone, sustained by the divine aid, like a skilful pilot, strove to steer his ship, laden with much wealth, into the safe and much desired harbour of his country, though almost all his crew were tired, and suffered them not to faint or hesitate, though sailing amid the manifold waves and eddies of this present life.

† WISE conjectures that we ought to read Hiberiæ, SPAIN, and not Hiberniæ, IRELAND, in this passage.

For all his bishops, earls, nobles, favourite ministers, and prefects, who, next to God and the king, had the whole government of the kingdom, as is fitting, continually received from him instruction, respect, exhortation, and command; nay, at last, when they were disobedient, and his long patience was exhausted, he would reprove them severely, and censure their vulgar folly and obstinacy; and thus he directed their attention to his own will and to the common interests of the kingdom. But, owing to the sluggishness of the people, these admonitions of the king were either not fulfilled, or were begun late at the moment of necessity, and so ended less to the advantage of those who put them in execution; for I will say nothing of the castles which he ordered to be built, but which, being begun late, were never finished, because the hostile troops broke in upon them by land and sea, and as often happened, the thwarters of the royal ordinance repented when it was too late, and blushed at their non-performance of his commands. I speak of repentance when it is too late, on the testimony of Scripture, whereby numberless persons have had cause for too much sorrow when many insidious evils have been wrought. But though by these means, sad to say, they may be bitterly afflicted and roused to sorrow by the loss of fathers, wives, children, ministers, servant-men, servant-maids, and furniture and household stuff, what is the use of hateful repentance when their kinsmen are dead, and they cannot aid them, or redeem those who are captive from captivity? for they are not able even to assist those who have escaped, as they have not wherewith to sustain even their own lives. They repented, therefore, when it was too late, and grieved at their incautious neglect of the king's commands, and they praised the royal wisdom with one voice, and tried with all their power to fulfil what they had before refused, namely, concerning the erection of castles, and other things generally useful to the whole kingdom.

887 Florence Huntingdon Simeon

which was thrown over him
by the fear of its coming.
Moreover, the constant invasions of foreign nations, by which he was continually harassed by land and sea, without any interval of rest, were a just cause of disquiet. What shall I say of his repeated expeditions against the pagans, his wars, and incessant occupations of government?

of the cities and towns which he restored, and
of others which he built, where none had been before? of the buildings of gold and silver, incomparably wrought at his command? of
the royal halls and chambers, wonderfully erected by his command, with stone and wood? of the royal vills constructed of stone, removed from their old site, and handsomely rebuilt by the king's command in more fitting places?
He, sustained by the divine aid,
did not suffer his government, once undertaken, to faint or hesitate, though sailing amid the manifold waves and eddies of this present life.
For all his bishops, earls, nobles, favourite ministers, and prefects,
continually received
from him instruction, exhortation, and command;
nay, at last, when they were disobedient, and his long patience was exhausted, he would reprove them severely, and censure their vulgar folly and obstinacy; and thus he directed their attention to his own will, and the common interests of the kingdom. But if, owing to the sluggishness of the people, these admonitions of the king were either not fulfilled, or were begun late at the moment of necessity, and so ended less to the advantage of those who put them in execution;
for instance the castles which he ordered to be
built, but which, being begun late, were never finished, because the hostile troops broke in upon them by land and sea, as often happened, the thwarters of the royal ordinance repented when it was too late,

and grieved at their incautious neglect
of the king's commands, and they praised the royal wisdom with one voice, and tried with all their power to fulfil what they had before refused.

10 For we have also seen and read letters and various gifts sent to him from Jerusalem by Abel the patriarch.
11 How he enlarged the dominions of his kingdom, and rebuilt the walls of the cities, and strengthened their defences which had been thrown down, and made others which before were not, what man, even if sustained by civic eloquence, can describe with the lips of exultation?
Who, moreover, shall tell how he enriched the Holy Places with ornaments and with kingly gifts? He was often disturbed in mind against the princes, and leaders of galleys, and all the race of the wicked, because they would not follow him in the studies on which he was bent. But yet, he alone, supported by the divine aid, like a skilful pilot, sought to steer his ship, that is the life of his own glorious mind, into the haven of a peaceful paradise. He was in the habit of keeping in frequent memory those verses:

He who would hope with cautious
A lasting seat to find [steps
And with firm feet to keep his stand
Against the blowing wind; &c.

And lower down:

Though down this world in ruin falls,
And winds may swell the seas,
Thou, shut within thy peaceful walls,
Shalt spend thy days in ease,
And smile at all the impotence
And fury of the breeze.

These things the pious king turning over and over in his mind, gave forth a fragrance by his unspeakable deeds which were the fruits of his goodness. Who shall tell what gifts he gave on festal days to his bishops, chiefs and soldiers? The poor then rejoiced in jubilee: then orphans and widows applauded with unbounded joy of heart. He [Alfred] knew those words of the scholastic writer; "Money is precious when it has been transferred to others: with the use of giving it ceases to be possessed." He constantly admonished his bishops shining with heavenly brightness, to correct the faults of the people and restrain by bold chastisement the folly of the vulgar: and he not only admonished the shepherds of the people, but also commanded his dukes and chosen servants, to make themselves wisely serviceable to the common good of all the kingdom.

Of his fixed purpose of holy meditation, which in the midst of prosperity and adversity he never neglected, I cannot with advantage now omit to speak. For, whereas he often thought of the necessities of his soul, among the other good deeds to which his thoughts were night and day turned, he ordered that two monasteries should be built, one for monks at Athelney, which is a place surrounded by impassable marshes and rivers where no one can enter but by boats, or by a bridge laboriously constructed between two other heights; at the western end of which bridge was erected a strong tower, of beautiful work, by command of the aforesaid king; and in this monastery he collected monks of all kinds, from every quarter, and placed them therein.

For at first, because he had no one of his own nation, noble and free by birth, who was willing to enter the monastic life, except children, who could neither choose good nor avoid evil in consequence of their tender years, because for many previous years the love of a monastic life had utterly decayed from that nation as well as from many other nations though many monasteries still remain in that country; yet, as no one directed the rule of that kind of life in a regular way, for what reason I cannot say, either from the invasions of foreigners which took place so frequently both by sea and land, or because that people abounded in riches of every kind, and so looked with contempt on the monastic life. It was for this reason that king Ælfred sought to gather monks of different kinds to place in the same monastery.

First he placed there as abbat, John * the priest and monk, an old Saxon by birth, then certain priests and deacons from beyond the sea; of whom, finding that he had not as large a number as he wished, he procured as many as possible of the same Gallic race, some of whom, being children, he ordered to be taught in the same monastery, and at a later period to be admitted to the monastic habit. I have myself seen a young lad of pagan birth who was educated in that monastery, and by no means the hindmost of them all.

* Not the celebrated John Scotus Erigena.

There was also a deed done once in that monastery, which I would utterly consign to oblivion, although it is an unworthy deed; for throughout the whole of Scripture the base deeds of the wicked are interspersed among the blessed deeds of the just, as tares and darnel are sown among the wheat: good deeds are recorded that they may be praised and imitated, and that their imitators may be held in all honour; wicked deeds are there related, that they may be censured and avoided, and their imitators be reproved with all odium, contempt, and vengeance.

For once upon a time, a certain priest and a deacon, Gauls by birth, and two of the aforesaid monks, by the instigation of the devil, and excited by some secret jealousy, became so embittered in secret against their abbat, the above mentioned John, that, like Jews, they circumvented and betrayed their master. For whereas he had two servants, whom he had hired out of Gaul, they taught these such wicked practices, that in the night, when all men were enjoying the sweet tranquillity of sleep, they should make their way into the church armed, and shutting it behind them as usual, hide themselves therein, and wait for the moment when the abbat should enter the church alone. At length, when he should come alone to pray, and bending his knees, bow before the holy altar, the men should rush on him with hostility, and try to slay him on the spot. They then should drag his

887 Florence

Among the other good deeds which he did, he ordered that two monasteries should be built, one for monks at Athelney,

where he collected monks of all kinds.

First he placed there as abbat, John the priest and monk, an old Saxon by birth.

Huntingdon

Simeon

The same king had made a beautiful monastery in the place called Ethelingaige, close to which on the western side was placed a fortress that had been made very strong by the command and the labour of the aforesaid king. In this convent he collected from all sides monks of different kinds, and settled in that place.

lifeless body out of the church, and throw it down before the house of a certain harlot, as if he had been slain whilst on a visit to her. This was their machination, adding crime to crime, as it is said, "The last error shall be worse than the first."

But the divine mercy, which always delights to aid the innocent, frustrated in great part the wicked design of the wicked men, so that it should not turn out in every respect as they had proposed.

When, therefore, the whole of the evil counsel had been explained by those wicked teachers to their wicked agents, and the night which had been fixed on as most fit was come, the two armed ruffians were placed, with a promise of impunity, to await in the church for the arrival of the abbat. In the middle of the night John, as usual, entered the church to pray, without any one's knowing of it, and knelt before the altar. The two ruffians rushed upon him with drawn swords, and dealt him some severe wounds. But he, being a man of a brave mind, and, as we have heard say, not unacquainted with the art of self-defence, if he had not been a follower of a better calling, no sooner heard the sound of the robbers, before he saw them, than he rose up against them before he was wounded, and, shouting as loud as he could, struggled against them, crying out that they were devils and not men: for he himself knew no better, as he thought that no men would dare to attempt such a deed. He was, however, wounded before any of his people could come to his help. His attendants, roused by the noise, were frightened when they heard the word devils, and both these two who, like Jews, sought to betray their master, and the others who knew nothing of the matter, rushed together to the doors of the church; but before they got there those ruffians escaped, leaving the abbat half dead. The monks raised the old man, in a fainting condition, and carried him home with tears and lamentations; nor did those two deceitful monks shed tears less than the innocent. But God's mercy did not allow so bold a deed to pass unpunished; the ruffians who perpetrated it, and all who urged them to it, were taken and put in prison, where, by various tortures, they came to a disgraceful end. Let us now return to our narrative.

Another monastery, also, was built by the same king as a residence for nuns, near the eastern gate of Shaftesbury; and his own daughter, Ethelgiva, was placed in it as abbess. With her many other noble ladies bound by the rules of the monastic life, dwell in that monastery. These two edifices were enriched by the king with much land, as well as personal property.

These things being thus disposed of, the king began, as was his practice, to consider within himself, what more he could do to augment and show forth his piety; what he had begun wisely, and thoughtfully conceived for the public benefit, was adhered to with equally beneficial result; for he had heard it out of the book of the law, that ths Lord had promised to restore to him tenfold; and he knew that the Lord had kept his promise, and had actually restored to him tenfold. Encouraged by this example, and wishing to exceed the practices of his predecessors, he vowed humbly and faithfully to devote to God half his services, both day and night, and also half of all his wealth, such as lawfully and justly came annually into his possession; and

887 Florence Huntingdon Simeon

Another monastery, also, was built by the same king as a residence for nuns, near the eastern gate of Shaftesbury, and his own daughter, Æthelgeofu, a nun, was placed in it as abbess.

These two edifices were enriched by the king with much land, as well as personal property.

Moreover he vowed humbly and faithfully to devote to God half of all his wealth, such as lawfully and justly came annually into his possession; and

He also built another monastery near the eastern gate of the city called Sceftesburg, intended for the residence of nuns, wherein he dedicated to God as abbess his own daughter the virgin Ethelgyfa. He gave such large gifts and possessions to both these monasteries that they had enough for food and clothing as long as life should last.

When these things which we have related were fully and firmly done, king Elfred, as was his wont, began with searching mind to look within the recesses of his breast, and to meditate upon that which is written in the divine letters; "If you offer rightly,

this vow, as far as human discretion can perceive and keep, he skilfully and wisely endeavoured to fulfil. But, that he might, with his usual caution, avoid that which scripture warns us against: "If you offer aright, but do not divide aright, you sin," he considered how he might divide aright that which he had vowed to God; and as Solomon had said, "The heart of the king is in the hand of God," that is, his counsel, he ordered with wise policy, which could come only from above, that his officers should first divide into two parts the revenues of every year.

When this division was made, he assigned the first part to worldly uses, and ordered that one-third of it should be paid to his soldiers, and also to his ministers, the nobles who dwelt at court where they discharged divers duties; for so the king's family was arranged at all times into three classes. The king's attendants were most wisely distributed into three companies, so that the first company should be on duty at court for one month, night and day, at the end of which they returned to their homes, and were relieved by the second company. At the end of the second month, in the same way, the third company relieved the second, who returned to their homes, where they spent two months, until their services were again wanted. The third company also gave place to the first in the same way, and also spent two months at home. Thus was the threefold division of the companies arranged at all times in the royal household.

To these therefore was paid the first of the three portions aforesaid, to each according to their respective dignities and peculiar services; the second to the operatives, whom he had collected from every nation, and had about him in large numbers, men skilled in every kind of construction; the third portion was assigned to foreigners who came to him out of every nation far and near, whether they asked money of him or not, he cheerfully gave to each with wonderful munificence according to their respective merits, according to what is written: "God loveth a cheerful giver."

But the second part of all his revenues, which came yearly into his possession, and was included in the receipts of the exchequer, as we mentioned a little before, he, with ready devotion, gave to God, ordering his ministers to divide it carefully into four parts, on the condition that the first part should be discreetly bestowed on the poor of every nation who came to him; and on this subject he said that, as far as human discretion could guarantee, the remark of pope St Gregory should be followed; "Give not much to whom you should give little, nor little to whom much, nor something to whom nothing, nor nothing to whom something." The second of the four portions was given to the two monasteries which he had built, and to those who therein had dedicated themselves to God's service, as we have mentioned above. The third portion was assigned to the school, which he had studiously collected together, consisting of many of the nobility of his own nation. The fourth portion was for the use of all the neighbouring monasteries in all Saxony and Mercia, and also during some years, in turn, to the churches and servants of God dwelling in Britain [Wales], Cornwall, Gaul, Armorica, Northumbria, and sometimes also in Ireland; according to his means, he either distributed to them beforehand, or afterwards, if life and success should not fail him.

When the king had arranged these matters, he remembered that sentence of divine scripture, "Whosoever will

887 Florence

this vow, with wonderful alacrity of mind, he wisely studied to fulfil.

He ordered with wise policy which could come only from above, that his officers should first divide into 2 parts the revenues of every year. When this division was made, he ordered that one-third of the first part should be divided into three parts, of which he gave yearly the first part to his ministers, the nobles who dwelt at court where they discharged divers duties; for the king's attendants were most wisely distributed into three companies so that the first company should be on duty at court for one month, night and day, at the end of which they were relieved by the second company and return to their homes, where they stayed 2 months attending to their own business. At the end of the second month, in the same way, the third company relieved the second, who returned to their homes, where they also spent two months. The third company also gave place to the first in the same way, and also spent two months at home. Thus was the threefold division of the companies arranged at all times in the royal household.

The second part was paid to the operatives, whom he had collected from many nations and had about him in large numbers, men skilled in every kind of construction; the third portion was assigned to foreigners who came to him out of every nation far and near; whether they asked money of him or not, he cheerfully gave to each with wonderful munificence.

But the second part of all his revenues, which came yearly into his possession, he ordered his ministers to divide carefully into four parts, on the condition that the first part should be discreetly bestowed on the poor of every nation who came to him.

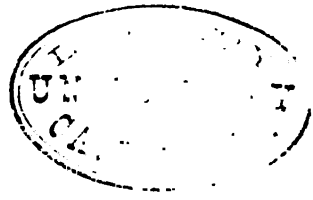
The second of the four portions was given to the two monasteries which he had built, and to those who therein had dedicated themselves to God's service. The third portion was assigned to the school, which he had studiously collected together, consisting of many, both noble and ignoble, of his own nation. The fourth portion was for the use of all the neighbouring monasteries in all Saxony and Mercia, and also during some years, in turn, to the churches and servants of God dwelling in Britain [Wales,] Cornwall, Gaul, Armorica, Northumbria and sometimes also in Ireland; according to his means, he distributed to them.
When the king had arranged these matters,

Huntingdon

Simeon

and divide not rightly, you have sinned." He reflected too, from his heart, on what is said by Solomon that wisest of kings, "The heart of the king is in the hand of Almighty God."

He also divided his income into 3 parts. The first portion of his income he gave yearly to his warriors:



the second, to the workmen whom he had gathered out of many nations: the third to foreigners who came to him from every quarter. For he knew that "God loveth a cheerful giver." For he was placed among manifold thorns of tribulation, although he was enthroned in the royal power.

give alms, ought to begin from himself," and prudently began to reflect what he could offer to God from the service of his body and mind; for he proposed to consecrate to God no less out of this than he had done of things external to himself. Moreover, he promised, as far as his infirmity and his means would allow, to give up to God the half of his services, bodily and mental, by night and by day, voluntarily, and with all his might; but, inasmuch as he could not equally distinguish the lengths of the hours by night, on account of the darkness, and ofttimes of the day, on account of the storms and clouds, he began to consider, by what means and without any difficulty, relying on the mercy of God, he might discharge the promised tenor of his vow until his death.

After long reflection on these things, he at length, by a useful and shrewd invention, commanded his chaplains to supply wax in a sufficient quality, and he caused it to be weighed in such a manner that when there was so much of it in the scales, as would equal the weight of seventy-two pence, he caused the chaplains to make six candles thereof, each of equal length, so that each candle might have twelve divisions † marked longitudinally upon it. By this plan, therefore, those six candles burned for twenty-four hours, a night and day, without fail, before the sacred relics of many of God's elect, which always accompanied him wherever he went; but sometimes when they would not continue burning a whole day and night, till the same hour that they were lighted the preceding evening, from the violence of the wind, which blew day and night without intermission through the doors and windows of the churches, the fissures of the divisions, the plankings of the wall, or the thin canvass of the tents, they then unavoidably burned out and finished their course before the appointed time; the king therefore considered by what means he might shut out the wind, and so by a useful and cunning invention, he ordered a lantern to be beautifully constructed of wood and white ox-horn, which, when skilfully planed till it is thin, is no less transparent than a vessel of glass. This lantern, therefore, was wonderfully made of wood and horn, as we before said, and by night a candle was put into it, which shone as brightly without as within, and was not extinguished by the wind; for the opening of the lantern was also closed up, according to the king's command, by a door of horn.

† Uncias pollicis.

By this contrivance, then, six candles, lighted in succession, lasted four and twenty hours, neither more nor less, and, when these were extinguished, others were lighted.

When all these things were properly arranged, the king, eager to give up to God the half of his daily service, as he had vowed, and more also, if his ability on the one hand, and his malady on the other, would allow him, showed himself a minute investigator of the truth in all his judgments, and this especially for the sake of the poor, to whose interest, day and night, among other duties of this life, he ever was wonderfully attentive. For in the whole kingdom the poor, besides him, had few or no protectors; for all the powerful and noble of that country had turned their thoughts rather to secular than to heavenly things: each was more bent on secular matters, to his own profit, than on the public good.

He strove also, in his own judgments, for the benefit of both the noble and the ignoble, who often perversely quar-

he promised, as far as his infirmity and his means would allow, to give up to God the half of his services, bodily and mental, by night and by day, voluntarily, and with all his might.

Wherefore he began to consider, by what means and without any variation, he might discharge the promised tenor of his vow until his death. He at length, by a useful and shrewd invention, commanded wax to be given him in a sufficient quality, and weighed against penny pieces: and when there was so much of it in the scales, as would equal the weight of seventy-two pence, he caused the chaplains to make six candles thereof, each of equal length, so that each candle might have twelve divisions marked longitudinally upon it. By this plan, therefore, those six candles burned for twenty-four hours, a night and day, without fail, before the sacred relics of many of God's elect, which always accompanied him wherever he went.

Moreover the king

was a minute investigator of the truth in all his judgments, as in all other things.

relled at the meetings of his earls and officers, so that hardly one of them admitted the justice of what had been decided by the earls and prefects, and in consequence of this pertinacious and obstinate dissension, all desired to have the judgment of the king, and both sides sought at once to gratify their desire. But if any one was conscious of injustice on his side in the suit, though by law and agreement he was compelled, however reluctant, to go before the king, yet with his own good will he never would consent to go. For he knew, that in the king's presence no part of his wrong would be hidden; and no wonder, for the king was a most acute investigator in passing sentence, as he was in all other things. He inquired into almost all the judgments which were given in his own absence, throughout all his dominion, whether they were just or unjust. If he perceived there was iniquity in those judgments, he summoned the judges, either through his own agency, or through others of his faithful servants, and asked them mildly, why they had judged so unjustly; whether through ignorance or malevolence; i. e., whether for the love or fear of any one, or hatred of others; or also for the desire of money. At length, if the judges acknowledged they had given judgment because they knew no better, he discreetly and moderately reproved their inexperience and folly in such terms as these: "I wonder truly at your rashness that, whereas by God's favour and mine, you have occupied the rank and office of the wise, you have neglected the studies and labours of the wise. Either, therefore, at once give up the discharge of the temporal duties which you hold, or endeavour more zealously to study the lessons of wisdom. Such are my commands." At these words the earls and prefects would tremble and endeavour to turn all their thoughts to the study of justice, so that, wonderful to say, almost all his earls, prefects, and officers, though unlearned from their cradles, were sedulously bent upon acquiring learning, choosing rather laboriously to acquire the knowledge of a new discipline than to resign their functions; but if any one of them from old age or slowness of talent was unable to make progress in liberal studies, he commanded his son, if he had one, or one of his kinsmen, or, if there was no other person to be had, his own freedman or servant, whom he had some time before advanced to the office of reading, to recite Saxon books before him night and day, whenever he had any leisure, and they lamented with deep sighs, in their inmost hearts, that in their youth they had never attended to such studies; and they blessed the young men of our days, who happily could be instructed in the liberal arts, whilst they execrated their own lot, that they had not learned these things in their youth, and now, when they are old, though wishing to learn them, they are unable. But this skill of young and old in acquiring letters we have explained to the knowledge of the aforesaid king.*

* Asser's work here leaves off abruptly, which is the more remarkable, because, in a former passage of his work, he has shewn by his mode of speech, that he was alive in the 45th year of King Alfred's life, that is in 893 [see p. 100].

Here therefore we lose sight of Asser, and introduce the Annals in his place to make the 6 columns perfect. It may be remarked that Florence who has copied Asser almost word for word, has only a general likeness of phraseology to the Annals, like the other chroniclers.

887 Florence Huntingdon Simeon

He inquired into almost all the judgments which were given in his own absence, throughout all his dominion, whether they were just or unjust. If he perceived there was iniquity in those judgments, he summoned the judges, either through his own agency, or through others of his faithful servants, and asked them mildly, why they had judged so unjustly; whether through ignorance or malevolence; i. e. whether for the love or fear of any one, or hatred of others; or also for the desire of money. At length, if the judges acknowledged they had given judgment because they knew no better, he discreetly and moderately reproved their inexperience and folly in such terms as these: "I wonder truly at your rashness, that whereas by God's favour and mine, you have occupied the rank and office of the wise, you have neglected the studies and labours of the wise. Either, therefore, at once give up the discharge of the temporal duties which you hold, or endeavour more zealously to study the lessons of wisdom. Such are my commands." At these words the earls and prefects would tremble and endeavour to turn all their thoughts to the study of justice, so that, wonderful to say, almost all his earls, prefects, and officers, though unlearned from their cradles, were sedulously bent upon acquiring learning, choosing rather laboriously to acquire the knowledge of a new discipline than to resign their functions; but if any one of them, from old age or slowness of talent was unable to make progress in liberal studies, he commanded his son, if he had one, or one of his kinsmen, or, if there was no other person to be had, his own freedman or servant, whom he had some time before advanced to the office of reading, to recite Saxon books before him night and day, whenever he had any leisure: but the old men lamented with deep sighs, in their inmost hearts, that in their youth they had never attended to such studies; and they blessed the young men of our days, who happily could be instructed in the liberal arts, whilst they execrated their own lot, that they had not learned these things in their youth, and now, when they are old, though wishing to learn them, they are unable.

CHARTERS IN 887. None.

Saxon Chronicle

A. 888.

Here alderman Beocca carried the alms of the West-Saxons and of king Ælfred to Rome.

And queen Æthelswith, who was king Ælfred's sister, died on the way to Rome, and her body lies at Pavia.

And that year Æthelred archbishop of Canterbury, and alderman Æthelwold died in the same month.

Asser

* In the following year they entered the mouth of the river Ionna [Yonne], not without doing much damage to the country, and there remained one year.

* This is displaced, in Asser, Florence and Simeon, for the sake of the connection.

Annals

Ethelwerd 888

CHARTERS IN 888. None.

In the same year died queen Ethelsuuith.

In the lapse of the same year also, archbishop Æthelred died, and Athelbald commander in Kent.

A. 889.

Here there was no journey to Rome, except that king Ælfred sent two couriers with letters.

A. 890.

Here abbat Beornhelm carried the alms of the West-Saxons and of king Ælfred to Rome.

And Godrum the Northern king died, whose baptismal name was Æthelstan; he was king Ælfred's godson, and he abode in East-Anglia, and first settled that country.

And that same year the army went from the Seine to Santlaudan [St Lo], which is between Brittany and France; and the Bretons fought against them, and had the victory, and drove them out into a river, and drowned many of them.

This year Plegemund was chosen of God and of all the people to the archbishopric of Canterbury.

A. 890.

Died Guthram king of the pagans, who also at his baptism took the name of Athelstan. He was the first who reigned among the East-Angles after the passion of the sainted king Eadmund, and he divided that country, and tilled, and first inhabited it. He died, therefore, in the 14th year after he received baptism, and was buried in the royal vill called Headleaga [Headley] among the East Angles.

After one year abbat Byrnhelm carried to Rome the alms for the people, and principally those of the western English and of king Alfred.

Then also Guthrum, king of the northern English, yielded his breath to Orcus.

He had taken the name of Ethelstan, as he came out of the baptismal laver, from his godfather, king Ælfred, and had his seat among the East-Angles, since he there also had held the first station.

In the same year, the aforesaid army of barbarians removed from the river Seine to a place called Sandlaudan [Saint Lo], situated between the Bretons and the Franks; but the Bretons met them in arms, and obtained the victory, and followed them to the windings of a certain river, and there not a few of them were drowned in the waters.

A. 891.

Here the army went eastward; and king Earnulf, with the East-Franks and Saxons and Bavarians, fought against that part which was mounted before the ships came up, and routed them. And three Scots came to king Ælfred in a boat without any oars from Ireland, whence they had stolen way, be-

A. 891.

3 The great army of pagans came from the eastern kingdom of the Franks as far as Boulogne.

One year afterwards, the bands of the aforesaid army visited the eastern parts of France; king Arnulf met them; a fight of cavalry took place before the fleets arrived, and an army of eastern Franks came up. Saxons and Bavarians; the pagans spread their sails to flee.

In the same year, three

891 Florence	Huntingdon	Simeon
888.		7 But in the following year
* In the following year they entered the mouth of the river Ionna [Yonne], not without doing much damage to the country, and there remained one year.		12 In the year of our Lord's incarnation 888, 7 They entered the mouth of a river called the Ionna, not without much damage to the country, and there dwelt one year.
2 The noble chief, named Beocca, carried the alms of	king Alfred and the West-	13 Prince Beocca carried to Rome the alms of king Elfred.
3 In the same year the king's sister Æthelsuuith, queen of	Burhred king of the Mercians,	died and was buried at Ticinum.
4 In which year, also, duke Æthelwold and Æthelred archbishop of Dover died in the same month.		On that journey died Ethelsuith the king's sister, and she was buried in Pavia.

(1) 889.

CHARTERS IN 889. 1. WERFRITH, [bishop of Winchester] II, 117. 2. ALFRED king of Wessex, subscribed also by "Æthelred subregulus et patricius Merciorum," "Æthelflæd,' and others. II, 118. 3. A third charter of "ÆLFRED dux," subscribed also by several others, II, 120, and bearing no date is referred to 871—889. 4. ALFRED king: no date. II, 122.

(6) 890.

8 Abbat Bornhelm carried to Rome the alms of king Alfred and of the West-Saxons.	In the 19th year of king	In the year 890, abbat Beornhelm carried to Rome the alms of king Elfred and of the West-Saxons.
9 The Northman king Guthrum, whom, as we have said before, king Alfred received from the sacred font and gave him the name of Æthelstan, died this year.	Alfred, king Godrun the Dane, who was son of king Alfred and reigned in East-Anglia, was removed from this world.	In the same year died Guthrum king of the Northumbrians. King Elfred, as is read above, raised him from his baptism, and called him Ethelstan.
10 This man lived with his followers in East-Anglia, and first inhabited and possessed that island after the martyrdom of St Edmund the king.	CHARTERS IN 890. None.	
11 The same year the pagan army so often spoken of leaving the Seine, went to a place called Santlaudan, situated between France and Armorica. Against whom fought the Britons, who, having slain some, put others to flight, and drowned others in the river, remained masters of the field.	This year the army went from the Seine to Sanlaudan which is between Bretagne and France. But the Bretons fought with them, and driving them into a certain river, slew many of them.	In this year the aforesaid army went from the Seine to Sanlaudan, situated between Bretagne and France: but they were put to flight by the Bretons, and the greater number of them drowned in the nearest river.
5 To whom succeeced, in the archbishopric, Pleigmund who was excellently instructed in literature.	Here Plegmund was elected archbishop by God and all the people.	

(7) 891.

13 The army of pagans above mentioned, leaving West France, went into East France; but, before their ships could come to them, the emperor Arnulf, with the Eastern Franks, Old Saxons and Bavarians, fought against their land army and defeated them.	In the following year, the army went towards the east, and king Arnulf with the French, and Saxons, and Bavarians, fought against the army, and drove them back.	In the year 891, Heathured undertook the bishopric.
	CHARTERS IN 891. King ALFRED 'August 2. II, 123.	

cause they desired for the love of God to be in a state of pilgrimage, they recked not where. The boat in which they came was made of two hides and a half, and they took with them provisions sufficient for seven days; and then about the seventh day they came on shore in Cornwall, and soon after went to king Ælfred. Thus they were named: Dubslane, and Macbeth, and Maclinmum.

And Swifneh, the best teacher among the Scots, died.

race, burning with piety, privately form a boat by sewing ox-hides; they put into it provisions for a week; they sail seven days and seven nights, and arrive on the shores of Cornwall: here they left their fleet, which had been guided, not by the strength of their arms, but by the power of Him who rules all things, and set out for the court of king Alfred, who with his senate rejoice in their coming. From thence they proceeded to Rome, and, as is customary with teachers of Christ, they essay to go thence to Jerusalem ... Their names were, Dufslane the first; Macbeathath, the second; Magilmumen, the third, flourishing in the arts,

chosen men of Hibernian leave their country: they skilled in letters, and a distinguished masters of the Scots.

A. 892.

And that same year, after Easter, about Rogation week or before, the star appeared which in Latin is called cometa; some men say in English that it is a hairy star, because a long radiance streams from it, sometimes on the one side, and sometimes on each side.

(2) A.892.

1 Comets appeared after Easter, and about the time of Rogations.

Also in the same year, after Easter, a comet appeared, which some think to be an omen of foul times, which have already past; but it is the most approved theory of philosophers, that they foretell future things, as has been tried in many ways.

A. 893.

Here in this year the great army, about which we formerly spoke, came again from the eastern kingdom westward to Boulogne, and there was shipped; so that they came over in one passage, horses and all; and they came to land at Limenemouth with 250 ships.

This port is in the eastern part of Kent, at the east end of the great wood which we call Andred; the wood is in length from east to west 120 miles or longer and 30 miles broad: the river of which we before spoke flows out of the weald. On this river they towed up their ships as far as the weald four miles from the outward harbour, and there stormed a fortress: within the fortress a few churlish men were stationed, and it was in part only constructed.

(8) A. 893.

3 And thence with 350 ships to the mouth of the river Limen, and there, not far from the river, made a strong fortress at a place called Apuldran.

5 The river Limin runs out of the great wood, called Andreadesweald, which wood covers a space of ground in length from east to west 120 miles or more, and in breadth 30 miles.

One year after the barbarians fought king Arnulf, they go to Boulogne, and there build a fleet, and pass over into England.

There they station their fleet in the Limnean port, at a place called Apoldre [Appledore, in Kent,] and destroy an ancient castle, because there was but a small band of rustics within, and there they make their winter camp.

Then soon after that Hasten with eighty ships landed at the mouth of the Thames, and wrought himself a fortress at Middleton, and the other army did the like at Apuldre.

6 That same year Hasteng came with 80 ships to the mouth of the river Thames and made for himself a strong tower at Middeltun [Milton] on the south side of the Thames.

In the course of this year, a large fleet belonging to Hæsten arrives on the banks of the river Thames, and found a citadel on the coasts of Kent, at a place called Middleton [Milton]:

They encamped there the whole winter. And the number of years, from the glorious nativity of our Saviour was 900, all but seven.

A. 894.

In this year, that was about a twelve-month after these had wrought the fortress in

894 **Florence** | **Huntingdon** | **Simeon**

14 Three Scotchmen, Dusblan, Mahbethu, Malmumin, desiring to lead a pilgrim's life for the Lord, taking with them provision for one week, fled privately out of Ireland, and went on board a boat made of nothing but two hides and a half, and after seven days, arrived in a wonderful manner, without sail or tackling, in Cornwall, and afterwards went up to king Alfred.

15 In the same year died Swifneh the learned teacher of the Scots.

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(12) 892.

In the same year, also, the star called a COMET, was seen about the time of Rogation.

CHARTERS IN 892. 1. King ALFRED, subscribed also by Eadweard filius regis and others. II, 124. 2. King ALFRED; subscribed also, among others, by "Æthelwald filius regis." II, 124.

In the year 892
Died Wlfhere bishop of York, in the 39th year of his archiepiscopacy.

893.

The naval and equestrian army of the pagans, leaving East Thames went to Bononia and crossing thence with their horses in 250 ships to Kent, came to land at the mouth of the river Limen, which flows out of the great wood named Andred. They drew their vessels up into the wood four miles from the river's mouth, and there inhabited by a few countrymen, and built for themselves another fort at a place called Apultreo.

Afterwards that great army returned into England with all their things in 250 ships to the fort of Limene; which port is in the eastern part of Kent near the great wood of Andredeslaige, which contains 120 miles in length and 30 in breadth. Landing from their ships, they built a castle at Awldre.

destroyed a half-built castle

In the year 893

CHARTERS IN 893. None.

And not long after the pagan king Hæsten with 80 vessels entered the mouth of the Thames, and built for himself a fortress at a royal vill called Middeltun.

In the meantime Hasteng came with 80 ships to the port of the Thames, and made a camp at Middletune [MILTON].

894.

The pagans, who inhabited

CHARTERS IN 894. None.

2 In the year 894
1 The East Saxons and Northumbrians gave hostages,

Saxon Chronicle | Annals | Ethelwerd 894

the eastern district, the North-humbrians and the East-Angles had given oaths to king Ælfred, and the East-Angles six hostages; and nevertheless, contrary to their plighted troth, as oft as the other armies went out with all their force, they also went out, either with them or on their own part.

On this king Ælfred gathered together his forces, and proceeded until he encamped between the two armies, as near as he could for the wood fastnesses and the water fastnesses, so that he might be able to reach either of them in case they should seek any open country.

From this time the enemy always went out along the weald in bands and troops, by whichever border was at the time without forces: and they also were sought out by other bands, almost every day, either by day or night, as well from the king's force as also from the burgs.

The king had divided his forces into two, so that one half was constantly at home, the other half in the field; besides those whose duty it was to defend the burgs. The army did not come out of their stations with their whole force oftener than twice: once when they first came to land, before the forces were assembled; a second time when they would go away from their stations.

Then had they taken much booty, and would at that time go northward over the Thames into Essex towards their ships. Then the king's forces outrode and got before them, and fought against them at Farnham, and put the army to flight, and retook the booty; and they fled over the Thames where there was no ford; then up along the Colne into an island.

Then the forces there beset them about so long as they there had any provisions: but at length they had stayed their term of service, and had consumed their provisions; and the king was then on his way thitherwards with the division which warred under him.

While he was on his way thither, and the other force was gone homewards, and the Danish-men remained there behind, because their king had been wounded in the battle, so that they could not carry him away, then those who dwelt among the Northhumbrians and among

7 Not long after he made another on the north side of the Thames, at a place called Beanfleot.

9 The beginning of the reign of king Charles the boy: his knight was Hagano.

10 That same year the city of York was taken by the Normans; but bishop Seba by God's help escaped.

11 This year also, Alfred king of the West Saxons fought against the Northmen at Fearnhame. He cut them to pieces, and wounded their king, and put them to flight and took much spoil from them and they were compelled to pass beyond the river Thames into Essex; but many of them perished in the Thames.

country of the East-Angles, king Saint Edmund. And

After the Easter of that year. the army which had come from Gaul leave their camp, and trace the intricacies of a certain immense wood, which is called Andredessuda, and they extended as far as the Western Angles.

Slowly as they go, they ravage the adjoining provinces, Hampshire and Berkshire:

These things were told to the heir Edward, son of king Alfred, who had been exercising himself in the southern parts of England.

And twice in the year they counted the spoil which they had obtained by fraud, in the land which borders on the southern bank of the Thames.

The filthy crew which were then in possession of the East Angles, suddenly removed to a place called Bamfleet;

and there the allied band divided; some of them remained, and some of them went beyond the sea.

After this they reach the Western Angles, who meet them with threatening arms and dense array at Farnham.

They exult, freed by the arrival of the prince, like sheep under the protection of the shepherd: the tyrant is wounded, and his troops are driven across the river Thames into the northern countries.

Meanwhile, the Danes are held besieged in Thorney isle.

Earl Ethered, setting out from the city of London, lent his aid to the prince.

The barbarians asked peace and a treaty: hostages are given, they promise by oath to leave the kingdom of the aforesaid king; their words and deeds agree together without delay.

Lastly, they set out for the formerly governed by the their ships fly round to them from the Limnean port to Meresige a place in Kent.

894 Florence

Northumberland, made a solemn peace on oath with king Alfred: as also did those who dwelt in East-Anglia, giving six hostages. But they broke the treaty, and, as often as the armies in Kent left their castles to plunder, they also went out to plunder, either with them, or alone, wherever they could.

When this was known, king Alfred, taking with him part of his army, and leaving the other part at home, as was his wont, and placing others for garrisons in the castles and cities, marched hastily into Kent, where he laid out a camp, in a place naturally very strong because it was surrounded on all sides by water, high rocks and overhanging woods; so that, if the enemies went out into any of the plains to plunder or fight, he could join battle with them without delay.
But they, now on foot, now on horse-back, plundering in bands, frequented those districts, which they saw were not occupied by the king's troops. But, contrary to their expectation, not only some from the royal forces, but also from the cities, attacked them almost every day and night, and so annoyed them, that they all left Kent and went forth together from their quarters to plunder, for they had gone out together to plunder whilst they first began to live in those places.

But this time they took a greater and more plentiful booty, and determined to cross the river Thames, and enter Essex, and so, with their booty, to meet the naval band, which they had sent beforehand. But, being overtaken by the king's army, they fought a battle with them at Feornham, and having lost their booty together with the horses which they had brought with them from foreign parts, they were all put to flight, and crossing the Thames where there was no ford, they took refuge in an island situated within the stream of the river Colne, where they were blockaded, until food failed

Huntingdon

1 But afterwards he took an oath to king Alfred, that he would hurt him in nothing. But the king gave many gifts to him and his wife, and his children; one of whom the king himself had held in baptism, and the great duke Edred the other.
But Hasteng, always unfaithful, built a camp at Beamfled.

Simeon

and swore to be true to king Elfred against the aforesaid pagans who had already come back to England.

the king's army, and the time for their going home came round, and another army relieved them. This army therefore went home, and king Alfred hastened up with the other half of his army, but the pagans seeing that their king was much wounded, and that they could not carry

Saxon Chronicle | **Annals** | **Ethelwerd** 894

the East-Anglians gathered some hundred ships and went about south; and some forty ships about to the north, and besieged a fortress in Devonshire by the north sea; and those who went about to the south besieged Exeter.

When the king heard that, then turned he westward towards Exeter with all his force, except a very strong body of the people eastward.

But king Alfred heard that a large part of the pagan army, which had been driven thence, had gone by sea and sailed to Exeter; wherefore he led with him his army of horse and foot-soldiers, and fighting sternly against them, defeated them there and put them to flight.

In the course of the same year, Hasten breaks away with his band from Bamfleet, and devastates all Mercia, until they arrive at the end of Britain.

These went onwards until they went to London; and then with the townsmen, and the aid which came to them from the west, they went east to Beamfleet.

Hæsten was then come there with his band which before sate at Middleton; and the great army was also come thereto, which before sate at Apuldre near Limenemouth.

The fortress at Beamfleet had been ere this constructed by Hæsten, and he was at that time gone out to plunder; and the great army was therein.

Then came they thereto, and put the army to flight, and stormed the fortress, and took all that was within it, as well the property, as the women, and the children also, and brought the whole to London; and all the ships they either broke in pieces or burned, or brought to London or to Rochester; and they brought the wife of Hæsten and his two sons to the king: and he afterwards gave them up to him again,

Meanwhile, by command of king Alfred, Adhered earl of the Mercians, together with the citizens of London, and other prudent warriors without number, came to Beamfleot, and besieged the fortress of the pagans, broke into it, and gained there numberless spoils in gold, silver, horses and garments.

Among which, also, the wife of Hasteng with his two sons were led to London, and brought before king Alfred; whom the king at once ordered to be given up, because her sons were, one of them son [GOD-SON] of king Alfred, the other of earl Adhered.

But, when Hasteng again came to Beanfleat, he rebuilt there the castle which had been broken down.

In the same year Danaasuds, in Beamfleote, was destroyed by the people, and they divide the treasure among them.

After this, Sigeferth, the pirate, lands from his fleet

894 Florence

him with them, remained there.

But king Alfred had not yet completed his march to attack the enemy, when lo, news is brought that the pagans who inhabited Northumberland and East-Anglia had collected together 240 ships, that some of them in 100 ships had sailed round the south coast of England, and the others in 40 ships round the north coast: that the one party had besieged Exeter, the others a fortress in Devonshire with a large body of men. When the king heard these things, he was not daunted by the rashness of the enemy, but became furious at his men being besieged. Without delay, he recalled all his cavalry, and marched to Exeter, leaving, however, a small body of men to finish the subjugation of the enemy he was following.

These, proceeding to London, with the citizens and others who had come to help them from the western coast of England, advance to Beanflot; for they had heard that the greatest part of the army, which had settled at Apultreo, had gone thither, and that king Haesten had come there with his army from Milton and had there built a fortress, but at that moment they were gone forth to plunder.

For the same king, a short time before, had made peace with King Alfred, and given several hostages, and had moreover at the request of King Alfred, given his two sons to be regenerated in the laver of salvation; one of them was taken from the fountain by King Alfred himself, the other by the noble duke Æthered.

But Haesten, going to Beanflot, quickly made there a fortress, and immediately plundered the lands of Æthered the father of his children.

A severe battle was therefore fought with the pagans, and the Christians, at the first shock, put them to flight, destroyed their works, and seizing on all they could find, carried with them the women and children to London. Some of the ships they broke to pieces, some they burnt, and carried the rest either to London or Rochester.

They also took the wife and two sons of Haesten, before he came back to Beanflot from plundering, and these they carried to king Ælfred. But he did them no harm, because one of them, as we have said before, was his [GOD] son, the other the [GOD] son of duke Æthered; but he confirmed the peace between them, and having received hostages not only restored the wife and sons of Haesten, at their father's request, but also gave him a

Huntingdon

4 But a messenger came to king Alfred saying, "A hundred ships are come from Northumberland and East-Anglia, and are besieging Exeter."

Simeon

And when he had gone out to plunder upon the king, the king broke into the aforesaid camp, and there took his wife, and children, and money, and booty, and ships;

but he gave back to Hasteng his wife and sons, because he was their god-father.

Saxon Chronicle	Annals	Ethelwerd 894
because one of them was his godson, and the other Ethered's the alderman's. They had become their godfathers before Hæsten came to Beamfleet, and at that time Hæsten had delivered to him hostages and taken oaths: and the king had also given him many gifts; and so likewise when he gave up the youths and the woman. But as soon as they came to Beamfleet, and the fortress was constructed, then plundered he that very part of the king's realm which was in the keeping of Æthered his compater; and again, this second time, he had gone out to plunder that very same district when his fortress was stormed.		in Northumbria, and twice devastates the coast, after which he returns home. In the course of one year also, died Guthfrid, king of the Northumbrians, on the birth-day of Christ's apostle, St Bartholomew, whose body is buried at York in the high church.
Now the king with his forces had turned westward towards Exeter, as I said before, and the army had beset the burgh: but when he arrived there, then went they to their ships.	Then he went to Sceobyrig, and there built a very strong fortress, and was joined by the army which had settled at Apuldran.	The army, which was then in the eastern part of the country, supplied them with reinforcements, and the Northumbrian, in the same way.
While the king was thus busied with the army there, in the west, and both the other armies had drawn together at Shoebury in Essex, and there had constructed a fortress, then both together went up along the Thames, and a great addition came to them, as well from the East-Anglians as from the Northumbrians. They then went up along the Thames till they reached the Severn; then up along the Severn.	And moreover a great multitude came to him from the East Angles and Northumbrians; who hastening upwards beyond the river Thames, went plundering to the bank of the river Severn, and there at Buttington built a strong tower. But soon Adhered earl of the Mercians, with the earls Eathelm and Eathelmnoth, and also with the other faithful servants of the king, laid siege to the town on all sides, until food failed the pagans, so that they ate the flesh of their horses, and, at last, compelled by hunger, they go out to battle against those who were on the eastern side of the siege. Many fell there on both sides, but, with God's help, the Christians gained the victory, and the Danes were put to flight. They went back to East-Anglia, from whence they had come.	The illustrious duke Ethelm, with a squadron of cavalry, and duke Ethelnoth, with an army of Western-Angles, followed behind them, and Ethered, earl of the Mercians, pressed after them with great impetuosity. The youth of both people join battle, and the Angles obtain the victory. These things are said by ancient writers to have been done at Buttington, and the exertions of the Danes appeared futile; they again ratify peace, give hostages, and promise to leave that part of the country. When two years were completed, from the time that an immense fleet came from Boulogne to Limnæ a town of the Angles, duke Ethelnoth set out from the western parts of the Angles, and goes from the city of York against the enemy, who devastate no small tracts of land in the kingdom of the Mercians, on the west of Stanford; i. e. between the courses of the river Weolod and a thick wood called Ceoftefne.
Then Ethered the alderman, and Æthelm the alderman, and Æthelnoth the alderman, and the king's-thanes who where then at home in the fortified places, gathered forces from every town east of the Parret, and as well west as east of Selwood, and also north of the Thames, and west of the Severn, and also some part of the North-Welsh people.		
When they had all drawn together, then they came up with the army at Buttington on the bank of the Severn, and there beset them about, on either side, in a fastness. When they had now sat there many weeks on both sides of the river, and the king was in the west in Devon, against the fleet, then were the enemy distressed for want of food; and having eaten a great part of their horses, the others being starved with		

894 Florence

large sum of money.

Huntingdon

This year died king Guthred.

Simeon

Meanwhile the pagan army from Beanflot, as we have said, being routed by the Christians, went to a city in Essex called Sceobyrig, and built there for themselves a strong fortress.

Many of the pagans from East-Anglia and Northumberland having joined them, they plundered first the banks of the Thames, and then of the Severn. Resenting their attacks, those noble leaders, Æthered Æthelm Æthelnoth and other servants of the king, whom he had left for garrisons in the fortresses, towns and cities, not only on the eastern side of the Perrot, but also on the western side of Selwood, and not only on the southern but also on the northern bank of the river Thames, collect a numerous army against the enemy, to which also was added an auxiliary force of Welshmen who lived on the western bank of the Severn.

Whilst, therefore, the king is going thither, the army, that was at Awldre, invaded Essex, and made a camp at Scobrih.

And issuing thence, they went as far as Budingtune near the Severn, and there made a camp.

From which, however, they were driven out by force, and fled to their camp in Essex.

But those who had besieged Exeter, hearing of the king's coming, fled to their ships, and stopped out at sea, plundering.

When these were assembled into one body, they pursued the enemy, and overtaking them at Buttington on the bank of the river Severn, laid siege, on both sides of the river, to the fortress in which they had taken refuge. Several weeks passed over; some of the pagans died of hunger, some of them, when they had eaten their horses, burst from the fortress and gave battle to those who were on the eastern side of the river, but when many thousands of the pagans had been slain, and all the others were put to flight, the Christians obtained the victory. In this battle the noble Ordeah, and many of the king's servants were slain. And when the pagans who fled, returning to East-Saxony, had come to their fortress and their ships, winter now coming on, they again gather a large army out of East-Anglia and Northumberland, and having placed their wives, their money and ships in East-Anglia, and left their fortresses, they march without

A fourth army came that same year from Northumberland as far as Leicester; but were there besieged, and afflicted by so sore a famine, that they ate even their horses.

Saxon Chronicle Annals Ethelwerd 894

hunger, then went they out against the men who were encamped on the east bank of the river, and fought against them: and the Christians had the victory.
And Ordheh a king's-thane was there slain, and also many other king's-thanes were slain; and of the Danish-men there was very great slaughter made; and that part which got away thence was saved by flight.
When they had come into Essex to their fortress and to their ships, then the survivors again gathered a great army from among the East-Angles and the North-humbrians before winter, and committed their wives and their ships and their wealth to the East-Angles, and went at one stretch, day and night, until they arrived at a western city in Wirral, which is called Lega-ceaster.
Then were the forces unable to come up with them before they were within the fortress: nevertheless they beset the fortress about for some two days, and took all the cattle that was there-without, and slew the men whom they were able to overtake without the fortress, and burned all the corn, and with their horses ate it in every evening.
And this was about a twelvemonth after they first came hither over sea.

The aforesaid army of pagans
wintered in the island which
is called Mersey.

A. 895. A. 895.

And then soon after that, in
this year, the army from Wirral went among the North-Welsh, for they were unable to stay there: this was because they had been deprived both of the cattle and of the corn which they had plundered.
When they had turned again out of North-Wales with the booty which they had there taken, then went they over North-humbria-land and East-Anglia, in such wise that the forces could not overtake them before they came to the eastern parts of the land of Essex, to an island that is out on the sea, which is called Mersey.
And as the army which had beset Exeter again turned homewards, then spoiled they the South-Saxons near Chichester; and the townsmen put them to flight, and slew many hundreds of them, and took some of their ships. Then that same year, before winter, the Danish-men who had sat down in Mersey, towed their ships up the Thames, and thence up the Lea. This was about two years after they had come hither over sea.

A. 896. CHARTERS IN 896. None.

In that same year the fore-
mentioned army constructed a fortress on the Lea, twenty miles above London, After this, in summer, a great body of the townsmen, and also of other people, went onwards until they arrived at the Danish fortress; and there they were put to flight, and some four king's-thanes were slain. Then after this during harvest, the king encamped near to the town, while the people reaped their corn, so that the Danish-men might not deprive them of the crop. Then on a certain day the king rode up along the river, and observed where the river might be obstructed, so that they would be unable to bring out their ships. And they then did thus: they constructed two fortresses, on the two sides of the river. When they had already begun the work, and had encamped there-beside, then perceived the army that they should not be able to bring out their ships. They then abandoned them, and went across the country till they arrived at Cwatbridge by the Severn; and there they constructed a fortress. Then the forces rode westwards after the army: and the men of London took possession of the ships; and all which they could not bring away they broke up and those which there were 'stalworth' they brought to London: moreover the Danish-men had committed their wives to the keeping of the East-Angles before they went out from their fortress. Then sat they down for the winter at Cwatbridge. This was about three years after they had come hither over sea to Limene-mouth.

A. 897.

After this, in the summer of this year, the army broke up, some for East-Anglia, some for North-humbria, and they who were moneyless procured

Hasteng, with the armies that adhered to him, in the 3rd year after they came to the mouth of the river Thames and to the mouth of the river

CHARTERS IN 897. Duke Ethelwolf. II, 127.

897 Florence Huntingdon Simeon

intermission and enter the city of Legions, called in Saxon Legeceastre, at that time deserted, before the army of Ælfred and the underking Æthered, who were following, could overtake them. Some of them, however, they took and put to death, re-taking all the sheep and oxen which they had gained by plunder: they then besieged the city two days, and gave some of the standing corn to their horses, burning the rest. All this was done after the revolution of one year from the time when they had left the coasts of Gaul, and entered the mouth of the Limene.

895.

The before-named army of the pagans, not having the means of subsistence—for the Christians had taken every thing from them—enter the land of the Southern Britons, and devastating it far and wide, carry off with them a very great booty. And, because they did not dare to return through Mercia for fear of the Mercians, they went first through Northumberland, then through the Mediterranean Angles, and having taken their wives and ships in East-Anglia, entered an island called Meresig situated on the sea-coast in the eastern part of East-Saxony.

In the 23rd year of king Alfred, the Danes, who were in Leicester, went round through North Wales and Northumberland to Mersey, an island in Essex.

CHARTERS IN 895. King ALFRED, subscribed also by Plegmund archbishop of Canterbury, Ethelbald of York, nine other bishops, "Grimbaldus sacerdos," "Johannes abbas." "Eadredus comes," "Ethelredus Gainorum dux," "Ælswytha regina" and "Æthelredus dux Merciorum," II, 125.

Afterwards, roused by the sufferings of his men aforesaid, he [ALFRED] reached Exeter, & the pagans terrified at his coming, fled to their ships, and so returning to their seats, near the city which is called in English Cissaceastre, in the province of the South-Saxons, they carried off booty. But being routed by the inhabitants of that city, the greater part of them were wounded or slain, and many of their ships taken.

But the army that had besieged Exeter, was caught plundering near Ciceastre, where they lost many of their men, and lost some of their ships.

The aforesaid army which besieged Exancestre, ravaged every thing round Cissacestre. But not long after they were put to the rout by those who were in the city, many of them were slain, and many of their ships were taken.

2 896.

1 In the same year they drew their ships up the river Thames, and afterwards up the river Ligea, and began to build for themselves a fortress near the river, 20 miles from London.

In the summer-time, a great part of the citizens of London, and many from the neighbouring places, endeavour to destroy the fortress which the pagans had made for themselves, but their resistance was so great, that the Christians are put to flight and four of king Alfred's officers are slain. But the king himself, in the autumn, measured out his camp not far from the city, in order to prevent the pagans from carrying off the crops of the provincials. But one day as the king was riding along the river's bank, he considered where he could find a favorable place for blocking up the river, that the Danes might not be able to extricate their ships; and without delay, he ordered his men to begin making a barrier on both sides of the river. When the pagans perceived this, they again committed their wives to the care of the East-Anglians, and leaving their ships, went on foot a rapid march to a place called Quatbrieg, and having built for themselves a fortress, they passed the winter there. Meanwhile the Londoners carried some of their ships to London and broke up the rest.

In the following year, the army that was on the river Lee, made a camp near that same river, 20 miles from London.

1 And afterwards, in the winter, they drew their ships up the Thames into the river Luye [Lea].

But the Londoners came to that camp, and fighting with the Danes, slew 4 of their leaders, and Almighty God at a timely moment gave the victory to his true followers. When the Danes had fled into their camp, the king caused the water of the Lea to be divided into three arms, that they might not be able to convey back their ships on it. The Danes, perceiving this, left their ships, and went as far as Quadruge near the Severn, and there made a camp, and wintered on the spot: having sent their wives for safety into East-Anglia. The king with his army pursued them.

But the Londoners carried to London some of their ships which they had left, and burnt the rest.

897.

themselves ships there, and went southwards over sea to the Seine. Thanks be to God the army had not utterly broken down the English nation; but during the three years was it much more broken down by the mortality which broke out among cattle and among men, and most of all by this, that many of the most eminent king's-thanes in the land died during the three years: some of whom were, Swithulf bishop of Rochester, and Ceolmund alderman of Kent, and Beorhtulf alderman of Essex, and Wulfred alderman of Hamtunshire, and Ealheard bishop of Dorchester, and Eadulf the king's-thane in Sussex, and Beornwulf the 'wic-reeve' at Winchester, and Ecgulf the king's horse-thane, and many also besides these, though I have named the most famous. That same year the armies from among the East-Anglians and from among the North-humbrians harassed the land of the West-Saxons, chiefly on the south coast, by predatory bands; most of all by their 'æscs,' which they had built many years before. Then king Alfred commanded long ships to be built to oppose the æscs; they were full-nigh twice as long as the others; some had sixty oars, and some had more: they were both swifter and steadier, and also higher than the others. They were shapen neither like the Frisian nor the Danish, but so as it seemed to him that they would be most efficient. Then some time in the same year, there came six ships to Wight, and there did much harm, as well as in Devon, and elsewhere along the sea-coast. Then the king commanded nine of the new ships to go thither, and they obstructed their passage from the port towards the outer sea. Then went they with three of their ships out against them; and three lay in the upper part of the port in the dry; the men were gone from them ashore. Then took they two of the three ships at the outer part of the port, and killed the men, and the other ship escaped; in that also the men were killed except five: they got away because the other ships were aground. They also were aground very disadvantageously: three lay aground on that side of the deep on which the Danish ships were aground, and all the rest upon the other side, so that no one of them could get to the others. But when the water had ebbed many furlongs from the ships, then the Danish-men went from their three ships to the other three which were left by the tide on their side, and then they there fought against them. There was slain Lucumon the king's reeve, and Wulfheard the Frisian, and Æbbe the Frisian, and Æthelhere the Frisian, and Æthelferth the king's geneat, and of all the men, Frisians and English, seventy-two; and of the Danish-men one hundred and twenty. Then, however, the flood-tide came to the Danish ships before the Christians could shove theirs off, and they therefore rowed them out: nevertheless, they were damaged to such a degree that they could not row round the Sussex land; and there the sea cast two of them on shore, and the men were led to the king at Winchester; and he commanded them to be there hanged: and the men who were in the single ship came to East-Anglia, sorely wounded. That same summer no less than twenty ships, with their crews, wholly perished upon the south coast. That same year died Wulfric, the king's horse-thane; he was also 'Wealh-reeve.'

Limen, crossed the sea without gain and without honour, but, having lost many of his companions, he put in at the mouth of the river Seine.

A. 898.

In this year died Æthelm, alderman of Wiltshire, nine days before midsummer [June 15]: and this year died Heahstan, who was bishop of London.

An. 898.

The emperor Arnulf died, and Louis his son was raised to be king.

In the same year Rollo with his army besieged the city of Chartres, but the bishop of that same city, named Walthelm, a most religious man, called Richard duke of Burgundy and Ebal count of Poictiers to his help, and bearing in his hands the shift of the blessed Virgin Mary, he drove back duke Rollo by the divine will, and freed the city.

Meanwhile, after four years from the time that the above-named king died, there was a great discord among the English, because the foul bands of the Danes still remained throughout Northumberland.

CHARTERS IN 898. 1. King ALFRED, subscribed also "Eadweard rex hanc regis donationem stabilito" and by others. II, 128.

A. 899.

CHARTERS IN 899. 1. WERFRITH, bishop of Winchester, II, 129. 2. Another of WERFRITH, without a date, is at II, 131. 3. A third, of King ALFRED, and subscribed "Signum Ædwardi filii regis," at II, 130, has no date, but must belong to some year about this time.

899 **Florence**

In the summer-time; the army of the pagans, which had wintered at Quatbrigge, went partly to East-Anglia, partly to Northumberland. Some of them remained there but others, getting possession of some ships, went to the river Seine before-mentioned. O with what frequent vexations, with how severe sufferings, in what a dreadful and lamentable manner, was all England annoyed, not only by the Danes, who had then occupied the parts of England, but also by those children of Satan. But it suffered much more, for three years, by a murrain among the cattle, and the death of noble men, who about that time departed this life. Among whom was Suithulf prelate of the church of Rochester, Ealheard bishop of Dorchester, Ceolmund duke of Kent, Beorhtulf duke of Essex, Eadulf the king's officer in Sussex, Beornulf provost of Winchester, Ecgulf the king's strator, and many others, but these were the most noble.

In the same year, the army of the pagans, settled in East-Anglia and Northumberland, carrying off booty along the sea-coasts, severely harassed the land of the West-Saxons, mostly in long and swift galleys, which themselves had made some years before. To oppose these other ships were made by Alfred's orders, twice as long, higher, swifter and less shaky, so as to beat the above-named ships of the enemy in strength. When these were sent out to sea, the king ordered them to take alive all they could, and to slay the rest. Wherefore it came to pass that 20 ships of Danish pirates were taken alive in that same year; of whom some were slain, some brought alive to the king, and hanged on the gallows.

Huntingdon

Thus, during the three years aforesaid, namely from the time that the Danes had entered the port of Limene, these did much harm to the English, but themselves suffered much greater harm. But in the 4th year, the army was divided: some went into Northumberland, some into East-Anglia, and others crossing the sea, entered the Seine.

But afterwards, some ships of the Danes came near the shores of Wessex, and making frequent invasions, at one time plundering, and at another fighting, they did no small damage to the provincials of Wessex.

Of the many fights that then took place, I will relate one, as having been attended with an unusual issue.

King Alfred caused some long ships, of 40 oars or more, to be got ready against the aforesaid ships of the Danes. And whilst six of the Danish ships were lying somewhere on the coast of Devonshire, they were surprised by nine of the king's ships. The Danes seeing this, moved against them with three only of their ships, for the other three were stranded and could not move because the tide was out. Six ships, therefore, of the English fought against three of the Danes: whilst the other three went against the three Danish ships that were stranded. The three Danish ships fought long and desperately against the six; but numbers at last prevailed, and two of the Danes were taken; the third fled, after all her crew had been killed except five. This being done, when the English wished to return to their companions which were near the Danish ships on the opposite shore, they were stranded; and the Danes seeing this, left their own ships and fought against the English who were in the three ships. Then might you have seen the English people of the six ships looking at the battle, and unable to bear them help, beating their breasts with their hands, and tearing their hair with their nails. The English fought manfully, and the Danes bravely attacked them. Forty two Englishmen were slain, and 120 of the Danes. But the Danes slew Lucheman the commander of the king's fleet who pressed upon them too boldly; on which account the English gave way a little, and the Danes almost seemed to be victorious. But, lo! the tide came up, and floated the vessels: the Danes got out to sea, and the 9 English ships were too late to overtake them. But a foul wind assailed the victorious Danes and cast two of their ships on shore: the crews were taken, brought before the king, and hanged at Winchester: but those who were in the third ship, landed, much crippled, in East-Anglia.

In that same year, 20 ships with their crews were cast away round the northern coasts.

Simeon

898.

899. In the year 899

Saxon Chronicle

A. 900.

A. 901.

This year died Ælfred, son of Æthulf, six days before All-Hallowmass [Oct. 26]. He was king over the whole English nation, except that part which was under the dominion of the Danes; and he held the kingdom one year and a half less than thirty years. And then Edward his son succeeded to the kingdom.

Florence

900.

Heahstan bishop of London died; to whom succeeded Theodred. Eardulf bishop of Lindisfarne died, to whom succeed the religious Cuthard.

901.

That famous, warlike, victorious [king]; the zealous protector of widows, pupils, orphans, and poor; skilled in the Saxon poets; dear to his own race, affable and liberal to all; endued with prudence, fortitude, justice, and temperance; most patient under the infirmity, which he daily suffered; a most discreet inquisitor in executing justice; vigilant and devoted in the service of God; Alfred king of the Angul-Saxons, son of the pious king Atheluulf; having reigned 29 years and 6 months, died, in the 4th Indiction, on Wednesday the 6th before the calends of November, [Oct. 27], and was buried at Winchester in the New Minster, where with the just he awaits a glorious resurrection.

* Some of the MSS. of Asser record, in a note written by a later hand, that king Alfred died on the 26th of October, A. D. 900, in the thirtieth of his reign "The different dates assigned to the death of Alfred," says Sir Francis Palgrave, "afford a singular proof of the uncertainty arising from various modes of computation. The Saxon Cronicle and Florence of Worcester agree in placing the event in 901. The first 'six nights before All Saints;' the last, with more precision, 'Indictione quarta, et Feria quarta, 5 Cal. Nov.' Simeon of Durham, in 899, and the Saxon Chronicle, in another passage, in 900. The concurrents of Florence of Worcester seem to afford the greatest certainty, and the date of 901 has therefore been preferred."

Annals

A. 900.

Alfred, truly so called, a man most strenuous in all things in battle, and the noble king of the West-Saxons, but prudent and religious and most wise, this year, to the great sorrow of all his people, went the way of all flesh, on the 7th before the calends of November [Oct. 26] in the 29 and half 'th year of his reign: in the 51st year of his age, Indiction 6. He was buried becomingly and with kingly honour in the royal city of Winchester, in the church of St Peter prince of the apostles. His tomb also is still extant, made of the most precious porphyry marble.

CHARTERS IN 900. None.

CHARTERS IN 901. 1. Ethelred duke of Mercia, II, 136. 2. Anonymous, II, 133.
The first of these, if given after Oct. 26, when king Alfred died, belongs to the reign of his son Edward the Elder. The latter furnishes no clue to its exact date. Three other Charters, found at II, 135, 138, 140, 141, bear the date of 901, and the name of Edward: they were consequently given after Oct. 25, 901.

Huntingdon

King Alfred, having reigned 28 years and half over all England, except those parts which were subject to the Danes, felt the sting of death. Of his toilsome rule, and irremediable afflictions, we have thought it right to speak in versification:

Innate nobility hath given thee honour,
Brave Alfred; and thy honour hath brought toil,
Thy toil hath given thee lasting reputation.
Joy mixed with grief was thine, hope blent with fear,
When victor, thou didst fear to fight o' the morrow;
Beaten, wast ready for tomorrow's fight,
Thy robes dropp'd sweat, thy sword dropp'd blood, and shewed,
How heavy task it was to be a king.
Through all earth's climes none but thyself e'er lived,
With power to breathe 'neath such calamities.
Defeat ne'er struck the sword from his hand's grasp,
Nor could the sword cut short his thread of life.
But now his tolls of life and rule are done,
And may Christ give him rest and rule for ever.

Ethelwerd 901

Lastly, in the same year, king Alfred departed out of this world;
that immoveable pillar of the Western Saxons, that man full of justice, bold in arms, learned in speech, and, above all other things, imbued with the divine instructions.
For he had translated into his own language, out of Latin, unnumbered volumes, of so varied a nature, and so excellently, that the sorrowful book of Boethius seemed, not only to the learned, but even to those who heard it read, as it were, brought to life again.
The monarch died on the seventh day before the feast of All Saints [Oct. 25], and his body rests in peace in the city of Winton.
Pray, O reader, to Christ our Redeemer, that he will save his soul!

Simeon

King Elfred died when he had reigned 28 years.
To whom succeeded his son Edward, who had been diligently admonished by his father especially to honour Saint Cuthbert.
Bishop Eardulf also died in Cunceceastre, wither he had transferred the body of Saint Cuthbert; with which he had fled during 9 years from place to place, in much hardship, and went before the army of the pagans.
To whom succeeded Cutheard in the bishopric.

II.

SKETCH OF

THE ANGLO-SAXON MINT.

Although the researches of English and Continental Antiquaries prove the very close resemblance in many respects between the manners and customs of the Franks and the Anglo-Saxons, one vast difference is clearly apparent; namely, the constitution of their mints. While the coinage of the Franks consisted, for the far greater part, of gold, that of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers, with the exception of the styca of copper, struck in the mints of Northumbria only, consisted almost exclusively of silver, of which the sole denominations that have come down to us, are the penny and the half-penny, very few specimens, however, of the latter being known.

Ruding, in his Annals of the coinage of Great Britain, has the following remarks: "Those, who deny that the Saxons possessed any knowledge of the art of coinage before they landed in Britain, will find it extremely difficult to point out the source from whence they derived it after their arrival; for the Anglo-Saxon money bears not, either in form, type or weight, the least resemblance to those coins which at that time were the current specie of this Island."

After observing that "the barbarous workmanship of the British coins could not have excited their attention," he expresses his surprise that the Britons should have continued their own rude method of coining "in preference to the beautiful specimens of Roman art, which were constantly before their eyes."

It is very clear from this that the laborious author of the Annals had but slight practical acquaintance with the subject, however valuable his work may be regarded as a compilation from written documents. To the general reader a detailed description of the various rude coins which must have been struck and circulated in this country after the departure of the Romans, would be tedious, and, without the assistance of illustrations, wholly impracticable. Long ere the once masters of the world withdrew for ever from their Island possession, their coins had ceased to be "beautiful specimens of art," and long previous to the introduction of Christianity among the Anglo-Saxons, they attempted to copy the degenerate types of the Roman money.

Nor was the desire to imitate better examples abandoned on the introduction of Christianity, as we may perceive in some of the pennies of Edweard the first, on which is an evident attempt to copy the representation of the gate of the prætorian camp as found on the coins of Rome, from the reign of Diocletian to that of Theodosius. A coin of Ciolwulf, found at Preston, furnishes still stronger evidence, since the reverse is a palpable copy of the common reverse of the gold coins of Valentinian, on which are represented the two sitting figures of the emperors crowned by Victory hovering above them.[1]

It is thus evident that the Anglo-Saxons did not disdain the best models of coinage then existing, and that the rudeness of their own money is not attributable to an unwillingness to copy but rather to a want of ability to execute coins equal to the rude examples of the Roman currency at its worst period.

As regards the *weight* of the Anglo-Saxon penny, it was originally of 24 grains, hence the term "penny weight." Now the Quinarius or half denarius of the Roman Empire, from the time of Arcadius and Honorius to the reign of Justin, is of very common occurrence even at this day, and no doubt circulated abundantly throughout the Roman dominions. It weighs on an average 24 grains, a fact which leads to the inference that the Saxon penny was accommodated in weight to the Roman coins which must have continued in circulation long after they were minted, and were pro-

(1) This coin is engraved in the Numismatic Chronicle, vol. v, p. 10. It is not unlikely that the Victory here represented is intended by the Anglo-Saxon artist to represent the third personage of the Trinity: see on this subject a note by the writer in the Numismatic Chronicle, vol. xii, p. 79.

bably, for a considerable period, current throughout those countries which had been wrested from the Romans by the Teutonic tribes. It is not contended that these tribes had not a style of their own, but it may be safely asserted that the influence of Roman art is visible in their ornaments and utensils; while the necessity of some conformity with an almost universal coinage was imperative. Notwithstanding this, we find many Saxon coins totally dissimilar in type to those of the Romans; on a considerable number the name of the King, and that of the Moneyer alone appears without any attempt to represent an effigy, but this, as before observed, cannot be attributed so much to design as to want of skill; on the contrary, when it does appear, as on many of the pennies of Alfred, it is very plainly an attempt to imitate the Imperial effigy on the coins of the lower empire with the diadem encircling the head.

In the reign of Athelstan, notices of the Saxon mints first occur. In the laws of that King it is declared that no one shall mint money except within the walls—BUTAN ON PORT,[2] that those who work in a wood or elsewhere unauthorised shall suffer amputation of the hand,[3] and that there shall be in Canterbury *seven* moneyers; in Rochester, *three*; in London, *eight*; in Winchester, *six*; at Lewes *two*; at Hastings, *one*; at Chichester *one*; at Hampton, *two*; at Wareham, *two*; at Exeter, *two*; at Shaftsbury, *two*; at the other towns *one*.[4]

The English numismatists of the last century have discussed at considerable length the possibility of the Anglo-Saxons having struck gold in their mints. We shall not here review their arguments; it will be sufficient to observe that the evidence on either side is often inconclusive, and at times at utter variance with facts, while examples are cited which only serve to shew the utter want of practical acquaintance with the subject. While one side maintained that no gold was ever coined in the Anglo-Saxon mints, simply because we have no written record of the fact, the other produced examples in opposition to this opinion, in utter ignorance that the pieces thus adduced as evidence were of Merovingian origin. Pegge not only attempted to prove the Anglo-Saxon origin of one of these coins, but did not hesitate to assign it to the mint of York in the beginning of the tenth century.

(2) Æthelstanes Domas, c. 14. (3) slea man of þa hand þe he þæt fúl mid worhte. Ibid (4) Elles to þam oðrum burgum, I. Æthelstanes Domas, c. 14.

Some years since a gold piece bearing the stamp of the very common pennies of Edward the Confessor was shown in London. Some of our best numismatists were satisfied of its authenticity, but admitting this to be established beyond a doubt, it affords of itself no evidence of an Anglo-Saxon coinage in gold. Pieces, however, assimilating in weight to that of the Merovingian gold *triens* and of rude fabric, have been discovered in England, and there is also a coin in the national collection at Paris, on the reverse of which DOROVERNIS occurs. This piece is assigned by French numismatists to England. It is of much neater fabric than the great majority of the Merovingian gold coins.[5] Besides these, there are some coins adjusted to the same weight, having a bare head, evidently not a regal portrait, and the legend LVND. These pieces have never been discovered on the continent, while examples have been found in and near London. The remarkable find of Merovingian coins on Bagshot heath included some of these pieces, and if it cannot be actually proved that they are of Anglo-Saxon mintage, it will be exceedingly difficult to assign to them any other origin.[6]

Whether the pieces called *sceattas*, of which examples are given in Ruding's 1st and 2nd plate, are the earliest attempts of the Anglo-Saxons to coin money, may perhaps be questioned, but there appears no reason for doubting that these may be reckoned among their first efforts at a regular coinage; several are without the Christian symbol, but, as many appear with it, it is probable that they are almost coeval with each other. As the word *sceat* signifies in Anglo-Saxon a part or portion, and as *scatt* in the Gospels of Ulphilas is used indifferently for a pound, a penny, or money generally, it was probably applied to those pieces which are by numismatists called *sceattas*, as the chief national coin then in general use by the Anglo-Saxons, the Roman copper money, doubtless still in circulation, supplying the smaller denominations; yet at the end of the seventh century it appears to have been the smallest coin in actual currency, as we may infer from the proverb NE SCEAT NE SCILLING i. e. "from the least to the greatest."

The penny is first mentioned in the laws of Ina. The derivation of the name is still open to the investigations of the etymologist. Some have derived it from the Celtic *pen*, a head; and although

(5) Numismatic Chronicle, vol. ii, p. 204; and vol. iv, p. 120.
(6) Ibid. vol. vi, p. 171.

this may be questioned, since the Saxon coins do not always bear the regal head, we have the example in later times of the *testoon*, a name given to the first English shilling, notwithstanding most of the English coins from the Conquest to that period, bore the royal portrait. Examples of the Saxon penny and the half penny, have come down to us, though, as already observed, but very few of the latter. Of the farthing, no specimens exist in the cabinets of our collectors, a remarkable fact when the value of the penny in Saxon times is considered. In the laws of Canute the half penny is stated to be the value of the wax charged on every hide of land for LEÓHT-GESCEOT church sceat, or church lights.[7]

The *styca*, a small copper coin about the size of the *sceatta*, appears to have been struck solely by the princes of Northumbria and the arch-bishops of York. Its value occurs incidentally in the gospel of Saint Mark, where the "two mites" are termed *stycas*.[8]

Some of our numismatic antiquaries have maintained that the *pound*, the *mancus*, the *mark*, the *ora*, the *thrymsa* and the *shilling*, were current coin and not merely money of account. There cannot be a doubt that the shilling was the division of the pound, and that the term is derivable from SCYLAN, to divide. With the exception of the *mancus*, these denominations appear not to designate coined money, but we frequently meet with mancusses of gold and mancusses of silver in Anglo-Saxon wills and charters, and a piece of money first noticed by M. de Longpérier throws evident light on the subject. On the 24th of March, 1842, this gentleman communicated to the Numismatie Society of London an account of a gold coin of king Offa in the cabinet of the Duc de Blacas, of the weight and size of the gold Arabic *Dinar*. It is, as usual with these coins, nearly covered with oriental characters, but in the centre are the words OFFA. REX. M. de Longpérier thinks with reason, that this is a specimen of the often mentioned but long sought for *mancus*, and he founds his opinion upon the fact that the Arabic word *nakasha* is rendered in Freytag's Dictionary, *cudit nummos*, while the passive participle, *mancush*, is very often used by Arabic writers, and signifies a *coin* whether of gold or silver. The piece in question is doubtless a copy by

(7) Healf-penig-werð wexes æt ælcere hide. C. 12.

(8) Twegen stycas, þæt is, feorðung peninges. MARK, xii, 42.

an Anglo-Saxon moneyer of an Arabic dinar with the name of Offa interpolated; and as the discovery of Arabic coins in hoards of Saxon money shews that they circulated in Europe at this period, there seems every reason to believe that this remarkable and unique example was adjusted to the weight of the gold Arabic dinar.

In the Numismatic Chronicle, vol. v, p. 123, will be found our remarks confirming the opinion entertained by M. de Longpérier which are as follows:—"Ruding, after observing that the word *Mancus*, is variously written Mancos, Mancs, and Mancuse, supposes the term to be derived from Italy, and noticing the conjectures of other writers, who suppose it to be formed from *manu cusum*, concludes that the term *cusus* could not have reference to simple weight. It is singular that he goes on to remark on the probability of the coin, as well as the name, being imported, without suspecting their Arabic origin. The mancus, according to Archbishop Aelfric, was equal in value to thirty pennies,[9] and in the laws of Henry the Ist we find it so estimated.[1] Now the weight of the gold penny of Henry the third is a little more than forty five grains, and it was current for twenty pence, its value being subsequently raised to twenty four pence or two shillings. The weight of the gold Arabic *dinars* of this period is about 66 grains, or one third more than that of the gold penny,—a fact which seems to set at rest all doubt as to the correctness of M. de Longpérier's conjecture that the coin with the name of Offa is really a specimen of the long sought for *mancus*. That Arabic coins were occasionally current in England during the Anglo-Saxon period we may believe from the circumstance of their forming a part of the treasure discovered recently at Cuerdale. It is true that these coins are silver, but it may be safely conjectured that they represent the mancus of silver, mancusses of gold and silver being mentioned in the writings of this period."—[2]

The money of our Anglo-Saxon princes generally bears the

(9) Libra on Leyden is Pund on Englisc. fif penegas gemacigaƀ anne scillinge and þrittig penega anne mancs. Saxon Gram. by Aelfric.

(1) Overseunesse regis est, in causis communibus, xx manc. quæ facient 50. sol. Leg. Hen. I, xxxv, § 1.

(2) Since this was written, a work has been published by the Royal Academy of Sweden, entitled "Numi Cufici Regii Numophylacii Holmiensis, quos omnes in terra Suecia repertos." Upsaliæ, 1848, to which the reader is referred for evidence of the circulation of these coins in Europe.

title REX, but on some of Anlaf's pennies we find CYNYNC. Those of the sole monarchs do not differ materially from the coins of the Heptarchy. Ecgbeorht's and Ethelwulf's bear SAXONIORUM and the latter OCCIDENTALIUM.

Among the many varieties of the types of Edward the Confessor, there is one which differs from any in the Anglo-Saxon series: it represents the king seated in a chair of state, crowned and holding the septre and the globe, a mode of representation revived on the gold penny of Henry the Third.

It is a fact worthy of notice, that the pennies of William the Conquorer were struck on the model of those of the last Anglo-Saxon monarch; indeed many can only be distinguished by the legend, which is given in the Anglo-Saxon character and language, a striking proof of the policy of this tyrant, who, while rigorously upholding his authority, prudently forbore to meddle with the coinage of his newly acquired territory.

III.

DESCRIPTION

OF ALL THE

COINS OF KING ALFRED

NOW REMAINING.

Of the coins of Alfred, formerly very rare, we now possess a considerable variety. Some of their types are in the highest degree interesting, and their succession is easily determined by comparison with those of the coins of contemporary princes and prelates, and with one another.

1. ELFERED M⁻X+ Bust to the right.
   + TATA MONETA Moneyer's name between two semicircular segments enclosing his designation.

BRITISH MUSEUM. PL. I, FIG. 1.

2. + ELFRED MX⁻+ / + DVDD MONETA } Same types as the last.

W. H. SHEPPARD ESQ. PL. I, FIG. 2.

The occurrence of the letters MX on these two coins is remarkable. There are coins of Ethelred, the brother and predecessor of Alfred, of the same type as these, which read REX + AEÐELRED M, and might be understood as indicating a claim on the part of Ethelred to the sovereignty of Mercia. But such can hardly be the meaning of these letters on the coins of Alfred. On the contrary, I should prefer taking them, on these, as well as on the coins of Ethelred, as expressing the place of mintage.

3. ELFERED REX / TILEPEINE MONETA } Same types as the above.

BRITISH MUSEUM. PL. I, FIG. 3.

These three coins are very different in their workmanship from

those of a similar type which follow; and in this respect they more closely resemble the coin of Ethelred above referred to, than any others of his coins.

4. + AELBRED RE + / CIALMOD MONETA } Same types as the above.

British Museum. Pl. I, Fig. 4.

This type presents the following names of moneyers;

BIARNVLF	DVDD	MANNING	TATA
BOSA	DVNN	OSHERE	TIDBALD
CIALMOD	HEBECA	SEFRED	TILEPEINE
DEIGMVND	IARNRED	SIGESTEF	VVIEARD and VVLEARD.

5. + AELBRED RE+ Bust to the right.
SIEESTEF MONETA This type differs from the foregoing, having the arcs of the segments broken in the middle, and bent inwards. I know of no other coin of this type.

British Museum. Pl. I, Fig. 5.

6. + AELBRED RE + Bust to the right.
CIALVLF MONETA In three lines separated by bars curved at the ends.

British Museum. Pl. I, Fig. 6.

This type presents the following names of moneyers;

CIALVLF DVINC EÐELVLF.

Coins of the three last types are always of very base metal, and, like those of Ethelred and of Burgred King of Mercia, rarely exceed 20 grains in weight. The spelling of the king's name with B is remarkable: no other instance of this spelling is to be found on the coins of Alfred, although the use of B for F in some Saxon names is not uncommon.

I place these coins first, because their resemblance to the coins of Ethelred and Burgred leads me to consider them as being Alfred's earliest coinage. Of that which I think should follow, a fragment only remains.

7. . . . ED REX Bust to the right.

The remains of its reverse shew that when perfect it presented the same type and the same legend, EÐERED MONETA, as the beautiful unique penny of archbishop Ethered, with the head, (probably of Alfred), in the same collection as this.

British Museum. Pl. I. Fig. 7.

The two coins which follow are the only ones to which we

cannot satisfactorily assign a place in the series, as they are quite different in their types from all the rest.

8. ÆLFRED + Bust to the right.
ÆT GLEAPA *A tau* connected at its extremities with the edge of the piece by beaded lines.

British Museum, Pl. I, Fig. 8.

This coin is remarkable, not only on account of its type, but for the legend on the reverse being in Saxon, instead of in Latin, for the prefix ÆT to the name of the mint, and for its being the earliest coin known of that mint, viz. *Gloucester*. The prefix ÆT to the names of places was not unusual during the Heptarchic period, as any one conversant with charters of that period will acknowledge. The following extracts may be adduced in illustration of this.

Bissenos agros quam incolæ hujusce regionis sic vocitant, *Æt Ulenbeorge*.

Charter of Coenred King of Mercia, A. D. 709.

In loco qui dicitur *æt Beathum* XC manentium, et in aliis multis locis: hoc est *æt Stretforda* XXX cassatos; *æt Sture* XXXVIII. Simili etiam vocabulo *æt Sture in Usmerum* XIIII manentium, *Æt Breodune* XII, &c.

Charter of Heathored Bp. of Worcester, A. D. 781.

See also the instance *At Sandwich*. p. 13 of the Harmony of the Chroniclers in this volume.

9. + AELFRÆD REX Written cross-wise.
+ LVDAMON.

William Assheton Esq. Pl. I. Fig. 9.

The neatness and elegance of this coin remind us of the coins of Offa king of Mercia; and its reverse type closely resembles that of some of the Mercian coins. The cruciform disposition of the obverse legend finds a parallel on the reverses of the coins of Ethelwulf and Ethelbert.

10. During the progress of some excavations in St Paul's Churchyard, London, in the year 1841, there was found a piece of lead, nearly an inch and a half square, and half an inch thick, having on each side a deeply indented impression from the obverse and reverse of a penny die of Alfred, of the type which next demands our attention. It would seem to have been a trial piece, struck from an unfinished die, and it is defaced on the obverse, apparently to prevent an improper use being made of it. The moneyer's name seems to have been EALDVLF.

C. R. Smith Esq. Pl. I, Fig. 10.

A coin in the British Museum (21), one in Mr Cuff's collection (20) and a fragment in that of the late Sir John Twisden, were

all that were known of this type before the disinterment of the Cuerdale hoard. In that hoard fifteen specimens were found, including the fragments 17 and 18; and of the whole number of this type now known all the important varieties will be found figured in Plate II.

11. + ÆLFRED REX SA + Bust to the right.
EADVLF MONETA A cross saltire within a lozenge, which is connected with the margin of the coin by a beaded line; three pellets at one side.

Rev. T. F. Dymock. Pl. II, Fig. 1.

12. ELFRED REX Similar bust.
LIAFVALD MON. This differs from the preceding in having a cross bar at each angle of the lozenge.

William Assheton Esq. Pl. II, Fig. 2.

13. AELFRED REX S Similar bust.
DVNNA MONETA Same type with a pellet at each side of the lozenge.

J. D. Cuff Esq. Pl. II, Fig. 3.

14. ELFRED REX Similar bust.
+ OTRHTMVND for TORHTMVND. The lines which connect the lozenge with the margin are not beaded in this specimen.

British Museum, Pl. II, Fig. 4.

15. ÆLFRED REX SAX Similar bust.
VVLFRED MONETA Same type as 13, with three pellets on each side of the lozenge.

William Assheton Esq. Pl. II, Fig. 5.

16. ELFRED RE Similar bust.
CIOLVVLF MONETA Similar type with an ornament attached to each side of the lozenge.

British Museum. Pl. II, Fig. 6.

17. . : . DREX SAX Similar bust.
EÐLEM ... ETA Similar type, with a cross attached to one side of the lozenge.

British Museum. Pl. II, Fig. 7.

18. ... ED REX SAX Similar bust.
... LF MONETA Similar type, with a cross attached to each side of the lozenge.

British Museum. Pl. II, Fig. 8.

19. ÆLFRED REX SI Similar bust.
LIAFVALD MONE Similar type, with a pellet on each side of the lozenge externally, and in each angle internally.

Rev J. W. Martin. Pl. II, Fig. 9.

20. + ELFRED REX SAX Similar bust.

REGINGIED MONETA. This differs from the last in having crosses instead of pellets on each side of the lozenge.

J. D. Cuff Esq. Pl. II, Fig. 10.

21. **X AELFRED REX** Similar bust.
+ DIARMVND Similar type, a cross within the lozenge, and a crescent attached to each side of the beaded lines which connect the lozenge with the margin.

British Museum. Pl. II, Fig. 11.

22. **X AELFRED REX** Similar bust.
+ BVRGNOÐ Similar type; a pellet at each side of the lozenge, another in each angle of the cross enclosed therein, and a curved line connecting each opposite pair of crescents.

J. Kenyon Esq. Pl. II, Fig. 12.

23. **+ ELFRED REX** Similar bust.
+ TIRVVALD Similar type; a bar across each side of the lozenge; a plain marginal line within the usual beaded margin; two of the lines connecting the lozenge with the margin indented, two plain.

William Assheton Esq. Pl. II, Fig. 13.

The date of execution of these coins is ascertained by their resemblance to the more common type of those of Ceolwulf II, king of Mercia, A. D. 874. The busts differ on all, but some, especially 13 and 15, are close imitations of those on the coins of the Roman emperors, and the diadem on all is clearly of Roman origin. There is a marked difference in workmanship between those which read **REX SAXONUM** and those which read simply **REX**. The former were probably minted in Alfred's paternal dominions of Wessex.

The following are all the names of moneyers which occur on coins of this type:

BVRGNOÐ	**EADVLF**	**LVLLA**	**VVLFRED**
CIOLVVLF	**EALDVLF**	**TORHTMVND**	
DIARMVND	**HEAHSTAN**	**REGINGIED**	
DVNNA	**LIAFVALD**	**TIRVVALD**	

Before I proceed to notice the coins of Alfred which come next in succession, I must draw the attention of my readers to two coins which are not indeed English, but are the evidence of the former existence of English coins of the same type, and hold out to us the expectation of such being discovered at some future time. In my Essay on the coins of East Anglia, I have noticed

coins of two princes, Ethelred and Oswald, on which we are presented with a type originally French, but adopted by them, the front or portico of a type, and here we have two other coins of the same type which are evidently blundered imitations of the coins of English Kings.

AELRF . . . REX	Front of a temple.
+ QVENTOVVICI	A cross with a pellet in each angle.
EDENATREX + QVENTOVVCI	Same types.

British Museum. Pl. VII, Fig. 1 and 2.

This place *Quentowic* is already notorious for blundered imitations of the coins of Cnut or Canute struck in England at *Ebraice* and *Cunnetti*, (for all the coins with the name of this mint found at Cuerdale and elsewhere, were clearly blundered; not one of them presenting anything like a correct legend on their obverse;) and here we have from the same place two other blundered imitations of coins of Alfred and of Ethelstan: for I think there can be no doubt that the obverse legends of these coins are intended for AELFRED REX, and EDELSTAN REX, respectively. It would appear probable, that the Northmen, when they went to France, carried with them English money, and during their occupation of *Quentowic*, employed ignorant moneyers to strike coins in imitation of them. It is to be observed that in genuine French coins of this type, the legend on the temple face of the coins is always XPISTIANA RELIGIO, or the name of the place of mintage. Only on these blundered coins, and on those undoubtedly English coins above referred to, do we find that type used as an obverse accompanying the name and title of the king. I consider it, then, extremely probable that future discoveries of coins, lost or concealed about the year 880, may make known to us genuine pieces of this type, both of Alfred and of Ethelstan, and for this reason I give these two pieces a place in the accompanying plates of Alfred's coins.

Mr Assheton's beautiful and unique penny of Ceolwulf II of Mercia, figured in Mr Hawkins's account of the Cuerdale coins, leads me to place next in succession the following coin, and then the London coins, between which and the penny of Ceolwulf it is, as it were, a connecting link.

24. DENI ƎJA XRX + Victory hovering over two emperors

seated, a device copied from the coins of Valentinian and others of the lower empire.

LONDONIA in monogram.

ANDREW MOORE ESQ. M. D. PL. VII, FIG. 3.

I do not myself consider this to be a coin of Alfred. On the contrary I prefer reading the obverse legend **ALF DENE XRX +**, which is precisely the reading on the obverse of a half-penny found with this at Cuerdale, and assigning it to Halfdene I, whose dominions were properly Northumbria, but who, in common with the other sea-kings, ravaged the whole island. Whether, however, it be considered to be of Alfred or of Alfdene, it answers the same end, of serving as a connecting link between the coin of Ceolwulf and those which follow, of London. Of these, upwards of fifty specimens are now known, the principal varieties of which will be found in Plate III. All have on the obverse the bust of the king, generally turned to the right, but in three instances to the left, and on the reverse the monogram of LONDON.

25. **ÆLFRED REX** — J. D. CUFF ESQ. PL. III, FIG. 1.
26. **ÆLFRED REX** — J. KENYON ESQ. PL. III, FIG. 2.
27. **ELFRED RX** — —— PL. III, FIG. 3.
28. **ELFRED RE** — BRITISH MUSEUM. — — 4.

It is not improbable that this coin may have been minted by the authority of Ethelred, the brother of Alfred, who appointed him to the government of London. The obverse legend is more like his name than that of Alfred: still it is but a blundered specimen.

29. **ÆLFRD REX** — Ibid. — — 5.
30. **ÆLFRED REX** — Ibid. — — 6
31. **ÆLFRED REX** — Ibid. — — 7.
32. **ELFRED REX** — Ibid. — — 8.
33. **ÆLFRED RE** — ANDREW MOORE. ESQ. M. D. — — 9.
34. **ÆLRÆD RE** — Rev. T. F. DYMOCK. Pl. VII, — 4.
35. **EDERED RE** — WILLIAM ASSHETON ESQ. Pl. III, — 10.
36. **ÆLFRED R** — J. A. WIGAN ESQ. — — 11.

37. ÆLFRED RE — JOHN BRUMELL Esq. Pl. VII — 5

38. ÆLFXED REX — WILLIAM ASSHETON Esq. Pl. III — 12.

39. AELF — BRITISH MUSEUM. — — 13.

40. CIV REI — W. H. SHEPPARD Esq. — — 14.

The last five are half-pennies, all that are known of this class of Alfred's coins, and the earliest specimens that have occurred in the English series of this denomination of money. Nos. 36 and 37 were found at different times amongst gravel dredged from the bed of the Thames, 38 and 39 in the Cuerdale hoard, and 40 was for many years prior to that discovery in Mr Sheppard's collection.

The two following, although they do not bear the name of Alfred, or of any other king, are of the same class and date as the foregoing.

41. EROT BOLT Bust to the right, of very different form from that on any of Alfred's coins.
LONDONIA in monogram.
BRITISH MUSEUM. Pl. V, FIG. 1.

42. HERIBERT Bust to the right, bearded.
LINCOLNIA In monogram.
J. KENYON Esq. Pl. V, FIG. 2.

I know not how to explain the legend on 41; it is probably the name of a moneyer blundered. There is a coin, in the British Museum, similar to 42, but with a beardless bust and a blundered legend EREENER on the obverse: (Ruding, Pl. 15, FIG. 9). These are the earliest coins known from the mint of Lincoln. The date of the London coins I am inclined to fix almost immediately after the rebuilding of that city by Alfred in 881. It had been destroyed by the Danes nine years previously. There is another class of these coins much rarer than the above, which present the moneyer's name on their reverses.

43. ÆLFRED REX Bust to the right.
TILEVINE MONETA. The usual monogram.
REV. J. W. MARTIN. Pl. IV, FIG. 3.

44. ÆLFRED REX Similar bust.
HEAEVVLF The usual monogram,
BRITISH MUSEUM. Pl. IV, FIG. 4.

45. ÆLFRED RE Similar bust.
HEREVVLF The usual monogram.
J. KENYON Esq. Pl. IV, FIG. 5.

46. ÆLFRED RE Similar bust.
VINVR DVL Both the monogram and the moneyer's name on this piece appear to be blundered.

This type presents the names of the following moneyers:

AELFSTAN HEAEVVLF HEREVVLF TILEVINE VINVRDVL.

47. ÆLFRED REX Bust to the right.
ÆÐELVF MO. The monogram on this coin is certainly not of London, though, like the Lincoln monogram, formed on the same model. I cannot discern in it the name of any place of importance in Alfred's time; the most natural way of reading it seeming to be ROISENG, which may possibly indicate a mint at Rishangles in Sussex, anciently *Ris-angra*. It is a coin of very superior design to any of the London coins. Three specimens of it were found at Cuerdale, and are in the possession, respectively, of Mr Assheton, Dr Smith, and the British Museum. The present drawing was made from the two former, one coin supplying the defects of the other.

Pl. IV, Fig. 6.

Before I proceed to the coins which are clearly the next in succession to the above, I must not omit to notice a singular coin which is figured in Hall's plates.

By the combination of the bust on the obverse, of a design similar to that of the London coins, with a reverse type peculiar to the coins of Edward the Elder, and the name of a moneyer which does not occur on any of those of Alfred, I was at one time induced to condemn the original of this engraving as a forgery. The discovery however of many of the originals of the figures in Hall's Plates, previously supposed fictitious, in the Duke of Devonshire's collection, taught me to hesitate in pronouncing decisions of this kind. The re-appearance too on a coin of Edmund from that collection, now in the British Museum, of a type previously supposed peculiar to the coins of Edward the Elder, and as far as we know disused during the reign of Athelstan, (the type of the flower), has shaken my suspicions of the genuineness of the coin now under discussion, which had arisen from the apparent inconsistency in the dates of its obverse and reverse types.

We now come to consider the coins of Alfred, without portraits, which appear of later date than any of those above described, and

again we have a connecting link between the two classes in the following curious and unique piece.

48. + EL ER ED RE A small cross; no inner circle.
TILEVINE MONETA LONDONIA in monogram.

JOHN HUXTABLE Esq. PL. IV, FIG. 8.

49. EL ER ED RE A small cross.
LIIII COLLA in two lines, between them three monograms.

BRITISH MUSEUM. PL. IV, FIG. 9.

On the Lincoln coin (42) we had the name of the mint in monogram, and that of the moneyer written at full length. On this, the order is reversed, the name of the mint is written at length, and that of the moneyer in monograms, for I read them HE RE BE the greater part of the name HEREBERT.

50 + ELFREDRE A small cross.
A large cross occupying the field of the coin with the letters CNVT attached to its extremities, and those of the word REX intercalated between them.

BRITISH MUSEUM. PL. IV, FIG. 10.

By the type of its reverse this piece is connected with that numerous class of the Cuerdale coins which I have elsewhere ascribed to one of the sea-kings who invaded England in the days of Alfred; (not, as Mr Hawkins seems to think, to that Cnut who was so famous in English history more than a century later;) Cnut was a name exceedingly common amongst the Danish princes, and there certainly was one of this name, contemporary with Alfred, a son of Ragnor Lodbrog and a sea-king. It is no fanciful or anagrammatic way of reading which I propose, but one by no means uncommon in Byzantine coins of the same period. It is simply taking the letters in the order in which the cross is formed CNVT. This reading has the unanimous sanction of the most eminent Continental numismatists, and I believe is now generally admitted by our own. In fact, no other has been or can be proposed, which has even the slightest probability to recommend it. This coin is not the least important link in the chain of proof that the lately discovered coins of Siefred or Sievert, and of this Cnut, are English.

51. + EL FR ED RE A small cross.
VVINEMON An ornament.

BRITISH MUSEUM. PL. IV, FIG. 11.

52. + EL FR ED RE
CVÐVVLF
A small cross.
In two lines.
British Museum. Pl. V, Fig. 1.

53. + EL FR ED RE
VVINIG MONE
Same type, the letters unusually small.
In two lines as before.
British Museum. Pl. V, Fig. 2.

54. + EL FR ED RE
ELDAMEFEC
Same types as the foregoing.
British Museum. Pl. V, Fig. 3.

55. + EL FR ED RE
EDELSR. GELDA
Same types as the foregoing.
British Museum. Pl. V, Fig. 4.

This type seems to call for particular remark. Although in common with the rest it has the name and title of Alfred on the obverse, yet it has on its reverse a legend which seems to give us the name and title of Ethelstan followed by the name of a mint GELDA. This may be *Geldestone* in Norfolk, or it may be read EDELS tani Regis GELDA i. e. "tribute or money of king Ethelstan." I leave these conjectures to the reader's judgement, myself preferring the former as being most in analogy with other contemporary coins.

56. + EL FR ED RE
CVDBERHT
A small cross with a pellet in each angle.
In two lines.
British Museum. Pl. V, Fig. 5.

57. + ELFRED RE
EADVVALD
Same types as the last.
British Museum. Pl. V, Fig. 6.

58. + EL FR EDRE
TIRVALDMO
Same types as the foregoing.
British Museum. Pl. V, Fig. 7.

59. AEL FRE DREX
BYRNELM +
A small cross.
In two lines.
British Museum. Pl. V, Fig. 8.

60. + ÆL FRE DRE
A small cross.

The reverse legend of this coin is in characters which have hitherto eluded all attempts to explain them.

British Museum. Pl. V, Fig. 9.

61. + ÆLFREDEE
EAVVALD
A small cross.
In two lines.
British Museum. Pl. V, Fig. 10.

62. + EL FR DRE
BIRN LDMO
Same type as the last.
British Museum. Pl. V, Fig. 11.

On this type we have the following names of moneyers:

ABENEL	CIRESRIEN	EÐELYNE	LVDIG
AÐELVLF	CVÐBERHE	EÐELVINE	LVLLA
AELFSTAN	CVÐBERHT	EÐELVLF	OSVVLF
ÆLFPALD	CVÐVVLF	EÐERED	RANHERE
ÆÐELSTAN	CVNEVLF	ELDA	SAMSON
ÆÐERED	DEALLA	EREFERÐ	SIGEVVALD
ALVYDA	DEALING	FERLYS	SIMVN
BEDRERN	DELA	FOLEARD	STFANVS
BEAGSTAN	DIARVALD	FRANBALD	TILEVVNE
BEGSTAN	DIARLO	GARIINE	TILEVVINE
BERHTERE	DVDIG	GODA	TILEVOIE
BEORNMÆR	DVNNA	GVÐHERE	TIRVEALD
BEORNMER	DVNNINC	HEAVVLF	TIRVALD
BEREHALD	EAETAN	HELICOLI	VIGBAD
BERNRED	EADVALD	HEREMOD	VIGBALD
BERBERH	EADVEALD	HEREFERD	VVINE
BERNVALD	EADVVALD	HEREVVLF	VVINIG
BIORNRED	EALDVVLF	HEREMVND	VVINIGERVS
BOFA	EGBER	HVNBERHT	VVNBERHT
BORA	ECVLF	HREAEAM	VVYNBERHT
BRIÐARD	ECVVLF	IENERAM	PYNBERHT
BVGA	ECPVLF	IVDELBAND	P.BERET
BVRNEREA	ECPVVLF	LVDG	VVLFRED
BYRNELM	EDEISTAN	LVDEI	

Some of the above readings are blundered, and there are others even more so. Some of these moneyers add to their names their designation **MO. MON. MONE. MONET.** or **MONETA**, and two, **ELDA** and **SIMVN** the words **ME FECit.**

The most remarkable feature on the coins 51 to 58 and indeed on 48 to 50 is the division of the obverse legend into four groups so as to give to the type a cruciform appearance. This is a feature so peculiarly English, being found only on these coins of Alfred, and on those of his contemporary Ethelstan (Guthrum) of East-Anglia, that its appearance on the money of Siefred, is another strong argument for their English origin. There is nothing of the kind to be observed on any continental coins; one of the emperor Otto III struck at Verona, about the close of the century, which at first sight might be taken to resemble these, is really of a very different design: it must in fact be read as the cross is formed, **VE. RO NA** and the letters are so placed that they

can be read at one view without turning the piece, just as in No. 50. Nos 59, 60 present a variation from this, dividing the obverse legend into three groups instead of four. This coinage, which from its resemblance to that of Ethelstan (Guthrum) of East-Anglia, I feel justified in supposing, commenced between A. D. 880 and 890, must have been continued until the end of the reign of Alfred. We do not indeed observe the peculiarity just noticed on the coins of Alfred's son and successor: for the greater length of the name *Eadweard* would not admit of such an arrangement: but some coins of this, ex. gr. No. 59, in every other respect correspond exactly with those of Edward the Elder.

As the work of which these pages form a part is devoted to the illustration of the life and writings of Alfred, this seems a proper place for introducing a few remarks supplementary to what I have advanced in my Essay on the coins of East-Anglia, and the result of subsequent research. I there endeavoured to shew the probability that Ethelstan, known in history as the eldest son of Ethelwulf, and king of Kent, was also a king of East-Anglia and a predecesser of S. Edmund. I was not then aware how intimate a connexion existed between this Ethelstan and his youngest brother Alfred, supposing as I then did that he died when Alfred was but two or three years old. Now however, I am convinced, and that chiefly by Dr Whitaker's arguments in his life of S. Neot, that S. Neot, who exercised so remarkable an influence over Alfred, was no other than this Ethelstan under a religious name.

In the year 823, Egbert King of Wessex sent his son Ethelwulf with an army into Kent, and the latter subdued and wrested from the Mercian yoke, not only that kingdom but those of Essex, Surrey and Sussex as well. These kingdoms then became and for many years continued to be an appanage of the West-Saxon crown. They were bestowed at first upon Ethelwulf, who upon the death of Egbert and his own accession to the throne of Wessex in 837, bestowed them upon Ethelstan his eldest son, by some supposed to have been of illegitimate birth, by others the fruit of an earlier marriage than that which produced the four brothers, Ethelbald, Ethelbert, Ethelred, and Alfred. Ethelstan continued to govern these kingdoms until the year 851, when he is mentioned as having defeated the Danes at Sandwich. But after that year he appears no more in history, and that about that time he ceased to govern Kent, seems probable from the fact that two

years later, A. D. 853, Duke Ealhere, who had been his colleague at the battle of Sandwich, is mentioned as fighting another battle but without him. Further, in the year 855, we find Ethelbald, his brother, the eldest son of the second marriage, styled king, and that whilst Ethelwulf was living; and his dominions would seem to be the same as those which Ethelstan had governed, viz. Kent, Essex, Surrey, and Sussex. In that year, Ethelwulf being then at Rome, King Ethelbald conspired with Alhstan, Bishop of Sherborne, and Eanwulf Earl of Somersetshire, to deprive his father of his dominions, and on his return they actually attempted to drive him from his kingdom. A compromise was made whereby Ethelbald was raised to the West-Saxon throne, and Kent with the other three provinces were left to his father Ethelwulf, who in the following year, A. D. 856, signs himself simply king of Kent, in a grant by himself of the Lordship of Lenham, to that Duke Ealhere who has already been mentioned in connection with Ethelstan. It appears, further, that about the year 851, Ethelwulf was a great benefactor to the monastery of Glastonbury, conveying thereto several manors, and that with his consent Earl Ethelstan gave other lands to the same monastery, together with his own person.

The life of St Neot, by John of Tynemouth, tells us that he was a son of Edulph, king of the West-Angles and of Kent, that he retired from the world and became a monk at Glastonbury: that some years afterwards with only one attendant he retired to a solitude in Cornwall; that after seven years spent there he went to Rome, and on his return gathered together a Society of monks and became their superior: that at this time he was frequently visited by Alfred for the purpose of obtaining his counsel and blessing: that before his death, which must have taken place about the year 876 he foretold the troubles that were coming on Alfred: that after his death he appeared to Alfred on two occasions, once in his retreat in Athelney to announce the end of his troubles, and again before the battle of Ethandune to encourage him with the promise of victory.

Besides this life there are two others, both said to have been written by William Ramsay a monk of Croyland, (though for my part I cannot believe them to be by the same hand), one in verse the other in prose. The former speaks of St Neot as the son of Edulph king of Kent, and of his being of the same blood as king

Alfred (called Ælvred), the latter that he was born of a royal race which reigned in the eastern parts of Britain, and that he was a near relation of Alfred (called Helored). Lastly, the pictured life of St Neot in the windows of his church in Cornwall, expressly tells us that he was a king, and that he resigned his crown to his younger brother.

This much then is common to Ethelstan and to St Neot; each was a son of Ethelwulf king of Kent, and brother of Alfred, and each was a king succeeded by a younger brother. But Ethelstan disappears from the page of history in 851, and about that time St Neot appears for nineteen or twenty years later: at the beginning of the reign of Alfred he was abbot of a monastery in Cornwall, and the various changes which had chequered his career since his retirement from the world, his noviciate at Glastonbury, his successive ordinations, his monastic life, his seven years' solitude in Cornwall, his journey to and return from Rome, and his establishment of his monastery, would well fill up that space of time. Glastonbury was the monastery to which St Neot retired, and to Glastonbury about the year 851 we find Ethelstan giving lands together with his own person. All this to me is conclusive that Ethelstan and St Neot were one and the same person: that Ethelstan when he left the world took another name νεωτὸς i. e. "the renewed one," indicative of his purpose of walking in newness of life, and that by this name he was ever after known. Admitting this identity, we see the reason why, when Guthrum embraced the Christian faith, Alfred his godfather chose for him the name of Ethelstan (whilst he allotted to him as his kingdom one of the ancient dominions of Ethelstan) for it was that of one very dear to him, and lately deceased, the last survivor of his four brothers, who had been to him more than a brother, a spiritual father whilst living, and after his departure to receive the heavenly crown for which be laid aside his earthly one, a protecting saint. The name he gave to Guthrum, as well as the dominions he assigned him were those which his brother Ethelstan had given up for the love of God. Ethelstan, then, born probably at the commencement of the ninth century (for he is said to have been an old man when he retired into Cornwall, which could scarcely have been later than 863), succeeded his father Ethelwulf in the kingdom of Kent in 837; yet reigned also in East-Anglia before that time, and even as early as the days of Beornwulf and

Ludica, Kings of Mercia, and continued to reign until nearly the days of St Edmund, A. D. 855 (for the series of his coins extends over the whole of that period, about a quarter of a century); resigned his crown to his younger brother Ethelbald, and abandoned the world: became a monk at Glastonbury under the name Neotus: retired thence to a solitude in Cornwall; after leading the life of a hermit there for seven years went to Rome and returned to establish a monastery in the same place: then became the counsellor of his youngest brother Alfred, and departed to a better life shortly before Alfred's troubles. Yet immediately afterwards, another was raised up in one of the kingdoms which nearly thirty years before had owned his sway, to perpetuate his name, Guthrum, the noblest of the pagan sea-kings changed by divine grace into Ethelstan the Christian king, the god-son of Alfred.

Returning from this digression for which I hope the interesting nature of the subject will be admitted as an excuse, I come now to conclude my notice of the coins of Alfred by discussing a few pieces which undoubtedly belong to the last ten years of his reign, and must have been issued contemporaneously with some of those last described.

63. + ELFRED REXPLEEN. A small cross.
EÐALVVLMO In two lines.
British Museum. Pl. VII, Fig. 6.

64. AELFRED REX DORO. A small cross.
BVRNVALD MO In two lines.
British Museum. Pl. V, Fig. 12.

65. + AELFRED REX DO A cross.
+ SCEADMVNRE The letter A.
British Museum. Pl. VII, Fig. 7.

66. + FFELFREDRC
+ CECADMVNDRF } Same types as the last.
British Museum. Pl. VII, Fig. 8.

67. + EL FR ED RN
+ SCLAMVNI } Same types as the last (two of the spaces in the legend filled by amulets).
British Museum. Pl. VII, Fig. 9.

The date of issue of all the above seems to be clearly fixed. On 63 we have, in addition to the name and title of Alfred, the first letters of the name of Plegmund, who became archbishop of Canterbury, A. D. 890. On 64, representing a large class of Al-

fred's coins, and on 65, we have the first letters of the name *Dorovernia*, shewing that they were minted at Canterbury, and connecting them also with one type of the money of archbishop Plegmund. This last, 65, and the two varieties which follow, 66 and 67, together form a connecting link between the coins of Alfred and those which bear the name of St Edmund, martyred king of East-Anglia. These have generally been supposed to be of ecclesiastical origin and to have been minted in the monastery founded in honour of St Edmund at Bury. My opinion, founded on a careful consideration of the evidence of the coins themselves, and the circumstances of the two principal discoveries of them, is that they were neither ecclesiastical nor wholly confined to East-Anglia, but that they were simultaneously minted, chiefly in that but in other parts of England as well, in honour of S. Edmund, after the death of Ethelstan (Guthrum) and before the close of the ninth century. The first of the three here given, connects them with Alfred, and with Canterbury, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that it was at his suggestion, and by his authority, that this coinage was issued.

On these Canterbury coins and on others, which, though blundered, appear to be of the same class, we have the following names of moneyers :

BIAERED	BRVNED	DVNNINE	EÐELYINE
BIAERÐ	BVRNVALD	EADVALD	HEREFRED
BIRAVAD	CERMAN	ELESTAN	HVNFRED
BIRIVALD	DIARVALD	EÐELSTAN	TIRVALD.

There is a peculiarity to be observed on the coins which follow, viz. that they have their legends both in obverse and reverse disposed in lines, two, three, or four. With the exception of the coins of earl Sitric, all other coins of the English series, on which the obverse presents a linear legend, have a circular one on the reverse.

68. ÆLFRED+ORSNA FORDA — In three lines.
BERNVALRMO. — In two lines.

J. Kenyon Esq. Pl. VI, Fig. 1.

69. ELFRED ORSNA FORDA — In three lines as before.
BERNVALDNO — In two lines, having between them a cross raised on steps.

British Museum. Pl. VI, Fig. 2.

70. **ELFRED ORSNY FORDA** In three lines as before.
BERNVALDIO In two lines.

W. Assheton Esq. Pl. VI, Fig. 3.

The name of the city of Oxford on these coins is usually read *Orsnaford*; Mr Sainthill has suggested that it should be read *Oksnaforda*, and I believe he is right.

71. This coin has a blundered legend both on the obverse and the reverse, but the former seems to be intended for **ÆLFRED BERNVALDMO** and the latter is evidently intended for **ORSNAFORDA**. It is, then, a distinct variety of the preceding coins, having the moneyer's name along with that of the king on the obverse and that of the mint on the reverse.

British Museum. Pl. VI, Fig. 4.

72. On this piece we can just make out the name of Alfred on the obverse, but the rest of the legend is so much blundered as to defy explanation. It is certainly not an Oxford coin, but may take its place here, as holding out to us the expectation of future discoveries of coins from other mints similar to those of Oxford. It will be observed that a part of the obverse legend is common to that of the reverse.

73. **EVE RAT.** In two lines: between them a cross on a a single step.
ME FECIT. In two lines.

J. Kenyon Esq. Pl. VI, Fig. 6.

This beautiful half-penny, together with the Oxford penny, 69, and the halfpenny, 72, are connected by their type with some of those of *Siefred*, discovered along with them at Cuerdale.

74. **+ AELFRED REX SAXONVM.** In four lines.
ELI MO— In two lines.

— Garland Esq. Pl. VI, Fig. 7.

The weight of this piece is 164½ grains. If it were intended for a coin, it must be supposed to be a quarter of the mancus. The mancus of silver should weigh 675 grains, and its quarter 168¾ grains.

75. **+AELFRED REX SAXONVM.** In four lines.
EXA

J. Kenyon Esq. Pl. VI, Fig. 8.

76. **+AELFRED REX SAXONVM**
PIN

British Museum. Pl. VI, Fig. 9.

77. A fragment of a similar coin.

BRITISH MUSEUM. PL. VI, FIG. 10.

The title on these coins *Rex Saxonum* occurring in connection with the names of the mints of Exeter, 75, and Winchester, 76 and 77, seems to confirm my conjecture that the coins which also present this title in Pl. II are of West-Saxon origin. In connexion with these I give two similar coins of Alfred's son and successor Edward minted at Bath.

PL. VI, FIGS. 11, 12. THE FORMER IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM, THE LATTER IN MR CUFF'S COLLECTION.

A

METRICAL ENGLISH

VERSION OF

KING ALFRED'S POEMS:

TO ILLUSTRATE ANGLO-SAXON POETRY

IN GENERAL.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

That the poems, of which king Alfred is known to have been the writer, are in themselves a better illustration of Anglo-Saxon poetry in general, than any laboured essay on the subject, has been already observed by the author of this version, in the short preface to the separate edition of the work.*

But as these essays are professedly a regular series, having for their object to illustrate the Manners, Literature &c. of the ninth century, it seems desirable—if only as a matter of mere form—not to let this version, with its running commentary, appear a second time before the public without a few words on the poetry and general poetic character of our ancestors.

It is a great draw-back to our appreciation of early poetry, that the help of rhythm and music can no longer be obtained. These are the most frail and fleeting of all the graces that wait upon the Fine Arts. It would seem, too, as if the very physical character of musical instruments were as transitory as the music itself. It appears, by the result of historical research, that the instruments used in different ages vary so considerably, that even those which pass under the same name, have never borne exactly the same form, and often not even the same adaptation to the uses of the musician.

A very large, and in many cases, a very heterogeneous assortment of instruments, are all included under the name of HARP: and, though this instrument, as far as we know, was the only one generally used by the Saxons, yet we have little or no clue to a knowledge of its shape, size, or principle of construction. This is the more to be lamented, because almost every fragment that remains of Anglo-Saxon poetry bears evident marks of having been written to be sung to the harp.

Thus, then, we have no external aid to guide us to the metrical principles of the ancient Anglo-Saxon Poems, and are, therefore, driven by necessity to an examination of those now existing, as the only source from which we can derive a scanty information on this subject.

The eminent historian of the Anglo-Saxons, Mr Turner, has,

* King Alfred's Poems, now first turned into English metres, by M. F. Tupper esq. London, 12mo, A. Hall, Virtue and Co. 1850.

with his usual diligence, discovered a passage in the works of venerable Bede, which aids us wonderfully in this enquiry.

In defining rhythm, Bede says, "It is a modulated composition of words, not according to the laws of metre, but adapted in the number of its syllables to the judgment of the ear, as are the verses of our vulgar [or native] poets. Rhythm may exist without metre, but there cannot be metre without rhythm, which is thus more clearly defined.

Metre is an artificial rule with modulation; rhythmus is the modulation without the rule. Yet, for the most part, you may find, by a sort of chance, some rule in rhythm; but this is not from an artificial government of the syllables. It arises because the sound and the modulation lead to it. The vulgar poets effect this rustically; the skilful obtain it by their skill. Thus that celebrated hymn is very beautifully made like iambic metre:

Rex eterne! Domine!
Rerum creator omnium!
Qui eras ante secula!

Such are other Ambrosian poems, and those not a few. So they sing the hymn on the day of judgment, made alphabetically, in the form of the trochaic metre:

Apparebit repentina
Dies magna Domini,
Fur obscura velut nocte,
Improvisos occupans.

Thus, then, it appears that the Anglo-Saxon poetry is not based upon a rigid metrical system of quantity like that of the Ancient Greeks and Romans, or upon the almost equally rigid system of accent, like that of the modern European nations; but *is adapted in the number of its syllables to the judgment of the ear.* Let us then see what peculiarities an investigation of the existing Anglo-Saxon poems will furnish us with.

1. They consist entirely of short lines, containing not always the same number of syllables, but *nearly* the same number, *according to the judgment of the ear.*

2. A second peculiarity is the almost total omission of particles. This Mr Turner considers to be a peculiarity of all rude nations. It may however be no more than an instance of the usual tendency of poetry to omit all such small words as impede the expression of poetic thought, or are unnecessary to the greatness of the poetic conception.

In instance of these two peculiarities may be adduced the opening lines of King Alfred's poems, which rendered literally run thus;

Thus Alfred [to] us	[The] king of [the] West Saxons
Old spells told,	Displayed [his] craft.

And again the first lines of Metre I :

It was years ago
That [the] eastern Goths
Out of Scythia
[Their] shield men led.

3. The third feature of Anglo-Saxon verse—for we must enumerate them very briefly—is their periphrastic nature, observable in almost every portion that remains. Take for example that beautiful description of the exile of Oslac in the Saxon Chronicle, A. D. 973 :

And then was eke driven out,
Beloved hero,
Oslac from this land,
Over rolling waters
Over the ganet's bath ;
Hoary-headed hero,
Wise and word-skilled,
Over the water's throng,
Over the whale's domain,
Of home bereav'd.

All these lines express no more than the first and third alone express, and yet how beautifully are they varied—they remind us of Hebrew poetry.

4. The same specimen displays to us the fourth peculiarity of Anglo-Saxon poetry, metaphor. It will be remarked that the sea is therein described not only as the 'rolling waters,' but as the 'ganet's bath'—the 'whale's domain.'

5. Inversion of words. This peculiarity is derived from the strong likeness which the Anglo-Saxon bears to all the Teutonic dialects, including the modern German. It is observable in almost every piece of Saxon verse that has come down to us, remarkably so in the ballad of king Edgar [Sax. Chron. A. 973].

Here was Edgar,
Ruler of Angles,
In full assembly
Hallowed king,
At the old city
Akemanscester :
But it the islanders,
Beorns, by another word,
Name Bath.

Another example of the same style is found in a short poem, given, also, in the Saxon Chronicle, about the murder of king Edward called the Martyr (979) :

The earthly murderers
Would his memory
On earth blot out ;
But the lofty Avenger
Hath his memory
In the heavens
And on earth wide spread.
They who would not erewhile
To his living body bow down,
They now humbly
On knees bend
To his dead bones.

6. The last and most interesting feature of our ancestral poetry was its *alliteration*,—a sort of rhyme—not that rhyme which, recurring regularly at the ends of the lines, leads the reader to expect its recurrence, and, whether rightly or wrongly, is now

looked upon as one of the ornaments which all poetry, in modern tongue, requires, but a rhyme, irregularly recurring, at very uncertain intervals, and as often at the beginnings as at the ends of the verses, nay even sometimes limited to a single letter, generally an aspirate or sibilant, occurring at the beginning of two following words. Of this peculiarity, very numerous instances will be found in the following version of king Alfred's poems, to which the reader's attention is now invited.

J. A. G.

THE TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

The "Poems of king Alfred" are here for the first time given to the English reader in a rhythmical dress: and that, without any known or meant sacrifice of faithfulness, any ill-judged attempt at "improvements" or additions, any other wish than the simple one of making Alfred's mind known to us his distant children, as much as possible in his own words. The writer has aimed everywhere at these five points: 1. To be literal. 2. To keep the still used words of our ancient Anglo-Saxon tongue wherever he could, and to throw aside all Latinized and other mixed forms of expression. 3. To vary the metres at least as often as Boethius, never admitting a false or doubtful rhyme. 4. To keep constantly in view the alliterations, the parallelisms, the frequently recurring echoes both in sense and in sound, which are principal features of the Anglo-Saxon poetry. 5. To catch the spirit, and not the notes alone, of Alfred's harp, and to be at once easy and exact, rhymed (often doubly and trebly) and yet, as a first rule, representing what Alfred really said, and not what a modern may put into his mouth for rhyme's sake. It will readily be believed, that, if these five rules have been at all regarded, the work here done has been one of no small difficulty: to use the neat phrase

of Peter Bertius in his preface to Boethius, it may seem "Exiguum mole munus," but it is "ingens pondere."

And now let the present writer give praise where it is due to those riper scholars in this ancient field of literature, whose labours have principally helped him. Mr Fox's prose version of the Metres of Boethius, as paraphrased by King Alfred, has been one mainstay in the matter; and Dr Bosworth's admirable dictionary another. At the same time, laborious study, a not infrequent independence as to the rendering of certain passages, and an earnest obedience to the five good rules above, leave (it is hoped) some balance of account to the writer's credit. Nothing is easier than to find fault; but in many cases nothing is more difficult than to propose a remedy. Let then the critical scholar, who may possibly see much to blame in this version, attempt the matter for himself; and then he will estimate the difficulty of such conditions as these; at once to avoid Latinisms, and to speak in modern flowing English,—to render Alfred faithfully, and yet to preserve rhyme and rhythm in a multitude of metres.

M. F. T.

Table of contents.

OPENING.
Thus Ælfred us Eald-spell reahte
I. OF ROME AND BOETHIUS.
Hit wæs geara iu Thæt Gotan eastan
II. A SORROWFUL FYTTE.
Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi
Hwæt ic liotha fela
III. A FYTTE OF DESPAIR.
Heu quam præcipiti mersa profundo
Æala on hu grimmum
IV. A PSALM TO GOD.
O stelliferi conditor orbis
Æala thu scippend
V. OF TROUBLE AND ITS CURE.
Nubibus atris
Thu meaht be thære sunnan
VI. OF CHANGE.
Quum polo Phœbus roseis quadrigis
Tha se wisdom eft

VII. Of Content, and Humbleness.

Quisquis volet perennem
Tha ongon se Wisdom

VIII. Of Primal Innocence &c.

Felix nimium prior ætas
Sona swa se Wisdom

IX. Nero.

Novimus quantas dederit ruinas
Hwæt we ealle witon

X. Of Fame, and Death.

Quicunque solam mente præcipiti petit
Gif nu hæletha hwone

XI. Of God's Wise Government.

Quod mundus stabili fide
An scippend is

XII. Uses of Adversity.

Qui serere ingenuum volet agrum
Se the wille wyrcan

XIII. Of Inward Likings.

Quantum rerum flectat habenas
Ic wille mid giddum

XIV. The Emptiness of Wealth.

Quamvis fluente dives auri gurgite
Hwæt bith thæm welegan

XV. Nero's Baseness.

Quamvis se Tyrio superbus ostro
Theah hine nu

XVI. Of Self-rule.

Qui se volet esse potentem
Se the wille anwald agon

XVII. True Greatness.

Omne hominum genus in terris
Thæt eorthwaran

XVIII. Of Sinful Pleasure.

Habet omnis hoc voluptas,
Eala thæt se yfla

XIX. Where to find true joys.

Heu! quam miseros tramite devio
Eala thæt is hefig dysig

XX. Of God and His Creatures.

O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas,
Eala min Drihten! thæt thu eart

XXI. Of inward light.

Huc omnes pariter venite capti,
Wel la monna bearn

XXII. Of the inner mind, and the outer sin.

Quisquis profunda mente vestigat verum,
Se the æfter rihte

XXIII. True Happiness.

Felix qui potuit boni
Sie thæt la on eorthan

XXIV. The Soul's Heritage.

Sunt etenim pennæ volucres mihi
Ic hæbbe fithru

XXV. Of Evil Kings.
Quos vides sedere celso
Geher nu an spell
XXVI. Of Circe and her company.
Vela Neritii ducis
Ic the mæg eathe
XXVII. Of Tolerance.
Quid tantos juvat excitare motus
Hwy ge æfre scylen
XXVIII. Of Heavenly Wonders.
Si quis Arcturi sidera nescit
Hwa is on eorthan nu
XXIX. Of the Stars and Seasons.
Si vis celsi jura tonantis
Gif thu nu wilnige
XXX. Of the True Sun.
Puro clarum lumine Phœbum
Omerus wæs
XXXI. Of Man's Uprightness.
Quam variis terræ animalia permeant figuris!
Hwæt thu meaht ongitan
Proverbs, or the Parliament at Shifford

OPENING.

Thus Ælfred us
Eald-spell reahte;
Cyning West-seaxna
Craeft meldode.
Leoth-wyrhta list.
Him wæs lust micel,
Thæt he thiossum leodum
Leoth spellode,
Monnum myrgen,
Mislice swidas;

Thy læs selinge
Utadrife
Selfliene secg.
Thonne he swelces lyt
Gymth for his gilpe.
Ic sceal giet sprecan,
Fon on fitte,
Folc-cuthne ræd,
Hælethum secgean,
Hliste se the wille.

Thus to us did Alfred sing
A spell of old;
Song-craft the West-Saxon king
Did thus unfold:

Long and much he long'd to teach
His people then
These mixt-sayings of sweet speech,
The joys of men;

That no weariness forsooth,
As well it may,—
Drive away delight from truth,
But make it stay.

So, he can but little seek
For his own pride:
A fytte of song I fitly speak,
And nought beside:

A folk-beknown and world-read thing
I have to say;
To all the best of men I sing,—
List, ye that may.

A short metre, and one full of echoes, is that which is best fitted to the genius of Anglo-Saxon verse, so as to represent it fairly. The writer in the first instance wrote another version of this opening rhyme; but saw cause to reject it, as not being literal enough, and because for the metre's sake he was obliged to interpolate two lines. The reason why it is here below inserted is, (not by way of proof of extraordinary pains-taking, for the same sort of labour has occurred in other portions of this version, but) because it is considered by a learned friend as worthy of preservation. To the writer's mind, a sin against faithful rendering was fatal, and he prefers the more literal rhyme just already given to the reader. Here then is the rejected one:

Ælfred told to us
A tale of olden time;
The King of the West-Saxons thus
Shewed forth his skill in rhyme.

For long he longed to teach
His people pleasant things,
In mingled changes of sweet speech,
And many counsellings,—

The dear delight of men;
Lest weariness forsooth
Should drive away unfairly then
The selfsame word of truth.

He thereby little sought
For any selfish praise;
[But of these people only thought
To give them good always.]

I thus will speak and say
What all the folk shall read;
List ye that may, and like my lay,
Let all the good give heed.

From the circumstance of the third person being used in these lines (a custom far from unusual with authors in every age and nation) some have supposed that Alfred did not write them. The truth seems to lie in the opposite opinion: not merely from the prevalent moral resemblance to Alfred's mind; as in that shrewd hint of the evils of dullness, in the eschewal of vain glory, &c;—but chiefly from the text itself. After disclaiming self praise, recommending rhymes, and announcing the author, Alfred comes simply to the first person, 'Ic sceal sprecan,' I SHALL SPEAK: it may be more learned to doubt, but it is far more sensible to believe.

This Opening rhyme does not occur in the Latin: it is a bit of original Alfred.

In this, as in others of these metres, there is a great satisfaction in seeing how easily they fall into modern rhymes, without a sacrifice of faithfulness. However, when (instructed by Dr Bosworth) we remember that of the 38,000 words of Modern English 23,000, or more than $\frac{5}{8}$ths, are Anglo-Saxon,—this harmony will appear less wonderful. But,—what a pity it is that ANY of the fine old root-words of our tongue should have been forgotten: for example, in this very Opening song, how is it we have lost 'myreg'—as good a word as 'pleasure,' and the root of 'merry'?—and 'gilpe,' vain-glory?—and 'spell' (not quite yet obsolete) story?—and 'list' (surely as good a word as art)?—'fitte' a song—'leoth' a poem,—and many more? We have of late years been throwing away, by the hundred, the stout old props of our strong north-country speech, and have substituted in their stead the sesquipedalia verba of Southern Europe. Nothing then can be more wholesome than to return for awhile to such good plain stuff as Alfred's stalwarth Anglo-Saxon: it is a right bracing air;—may the reader enjoy the sport as much as the writer. We have here before us fresh fields and a fair brooklet of English running water.

I. Of Rome and Boethius.

Hit wæs geara iu,
Thætte Gotan eastan
Of Sciththia
Sceldas læddon,
Threate gethrungon,
Theod-lond monig.
Setton suthweardes,
Sige-theoda twa;
Gotene rice
Gear-mælum weox;
Hæfdan him gecynde
Cyningas twegen,
Rædgod and Aleric,
Rice gethungon.
Tha waes ofer muntgiop
Monig atyhted
Gota gylpes full,
Guthe gelysted,
Folc-gewinnes.
Fana hwearfode
Scir on sceafte;
Sceotend thohton
Italia
Ealle gegongan,
Lind-wigende,
Higelaestan;
Swua efne from muntgiop,
Oth thone maeran wearoth,
Thaer Sicilia
Sae-streamum,
In eglond micel
Ethel maersath.
Tha waes Romana
Rice gewunnen,
Abrocen burga cyst.
Beadu-rincum waes
Rom gerymed;
Raedgot and Aleric
Foron on thaet faesten,
Fleah Casere
Mid tham aethelingum
Ut on Grecas.
Ne meahte tha seo wea laf
Wige forstandan,
Gotan mid guthe;
Gio monna gestrion
Sceoldon unwillum
Ethel weardas:
Halige athas:
Waes gehwaetheres waa.
Theah waes mago-rinca.
Mod mid Grecum,
Gif hi leod-fruman
Laestan dorsten.
Stod thrage on tham
Theod waes gewunnen,
Wintra maenigo;
Oth thaet wyrd gescraf,
Thaet the Theodrice,
Thegnas and eorlas
Heran sceoldan.
Waes se Heretema,
Criste gecnoden;
Cyning selfa onfeng
Fulluht theawum.
Faegnodon ealle
Romwara bearn.
And him recene to
Frithes wilnedon.
He him faeste gehet,
Thaet hy ealdrihta
Ælces mosten.
Wyrthe gewunigen,
On thaere welegan byrig,
Thenden God wuolde,
Thaet he Godena geweald
Agan moste.
He thaet eall aleag.
Waes thaem aethelinge
Arrianes
Gedwola leofre
Thone Drihtnes æ.
Het Iohannes,
Godne Papan.
Heafde beheawon:
Naes thæt haerlic daed
Eac tham waes unrim
Othres manes,
Thaet se Gota fremede,
Godra gehwilcum.
Tha waes ricra sum,
On Rome byrig,
Ahefen Heretoga,
Hlaforde leof,
Thenden Cynestole
Creacas wioldon.
Thaet waes rihtwis rinc.
Waes mid Romwarum
Sinc-geofa sella.
Siththan longe he
Waes for weorulde wis,
Weorth-myrtha georn,
Beorn boca gleaw,
Boitius,
Se haele hatte:
Se thonne hlisan gethah.
Wacs him on gemynde,
Maela gehwilce,
Yfel and edwit,
Thaet him eltheodge,
Kyningas cythdon.
Waes on Greacas hold,
Gemunde thara ara,
And eald-rihta.
The his eldran
Mid him ahton longe,
Lufan and lissa.
Angan tha listum ymbe,
Thencean thearflice,
Hu he thider meahte.
Grecas oncerran;
Thaet se Casere,
Eft anwald ofer hi
Agan moste.
Sende aerend-gewrit
Eald-hlafordum,
Degelice:
And hi for Drihtne baed,
Ealdum treowum,
Thaet hi aeft to him,
Comen on tha ceastre;
Lete Greca witan
Raedan Romwarum,
Rihtes wyrthe.
Lete thone leodscipe.
Tha tha lare ongeat
Theodric Amuling,
And thone thegn oferfeng;
Heht faestlice,
Folc-gesithas
Healdon thone here-rinc.
Waes him hreoh sefa
Ege from tham eorle;
He hine inne
Heht on carcerne
Cluster belucan.
Tha waes mod-sesa
Miclum gedrefed;
Boetius
Breac longe aer,
Wlencea under wolcnum,
He thy wyrs meahte
Tholian tha thrage,
Tha hio swa thearl becom.
Waes tha ormod eorl,
Are ne wende,
Ne on tham faestene,
Frofre gemunde;

Ac he neowol astreaht
Nither of dune;
Feol on tha flore,
Fela worda spræc,
Forthoht thearle:

Ne wende thonan sefre
Cuman of thaem clammum;
Cleopode to Drihtne,
Geomran stemne,
Gyddode thus.

It was long of yore
That the Gothic rout,
Forth from Scythia's eastern shore,
Led their shieldmen out;

Thronged with swarms of war
The lands of many a clan,
And in the South set firm and far
Two tribes to trouble man.

Yearly waxed and grew
Those Gothic kingdoms twain,
And Alaric and Rædgast too
Right royally did reign.

Then down the Alps the Goth
Made haste to force his way,
In haughty pride all fiercely wroth,
And lusting for the fray:

Their banner fluttered bright,
While all Italia through
Shot ruthless in their linden might
The shielded warrior crew,

Forth from the Alpine drifts
To great Sicilia's coast,
Where in the seastream it uplifts
Its lofty island boast.

Then Rome's old rule was crush'd,
Her costliness despoil'd,
And by that host, with battle flush'd,
The city's beauty soil'd.

Alaric and Raedgast
The fastness first they seek,
While Cæsar with his chiefs fled fast
For safety to the Greek.

Then could the wretched band,
Left mournfully behind,
No more the warring Goth withstand,
Nor much of mercy find.

Unwillingly their trust
The warders then gave up,
None to his oath was true and just;
And full was sorrow's cup.

Yet to the Greek outyearn'd
The people, as at first,
And for some daring leader burn'd,
To follow whom they durst.

The people wore their woes
Many a wintry year,
Till weird-ordain'd Theodric rose,
Whom thane and earl should hear.

To Christ the chief was born,
And water wash'd the king,
While all Rome's children blest the morn,
That peace with it should bring.

To Rome he vowed full fast
Her old-time rights to yield,
While God should grant his life to last,
The Gothic power to wield.

He did forswear all that:
The Atheling he lied,
To please Arius God forgat,
And falsely slipp'd aside.

He broke his plighted oath,
And, without right or ruth,
Good John the pope against all troth
Beheaded for the truth.

A shameful deed was there;
And heaps of other ill
Against the good this Goth did dare
In wickedness of will.

A man there was just set
For heretoch in Rome,
Loved by the lord whose bread he ate,
And dear to all at home:

Dear also to the Greek,
When he the town did save;
A righteous man, whom all would seek,
For many gifts he gave.

Long since was he full wise,
In worldly wit and lore,
Eager in worth and wealth to rise,
And skill'd on books to pore.

Boethius was he hight;
He ate shame's bitter bread,
And ever kept the scorn in sight
Outlandish kings had said.

He to the Greek was true,
And oft the old-rights told,
Which he and his forefathers too
From those had won of old.

Carefully then he plann'd
To bring the Greek to Rome,
That Cæsar in his rightful land
Again might reign at home.

In hidden haste he plied
With letters all the lords,
And prayed them by the Lord who died
To heed his earnest words.

Greece should give laws to Rome,
And Rome should Greece obey;
The people longed to let them come
To drive the Goth away.

But lo! the Amuling
Theodric found out all,
And bade his fellows seize and bring
This highborn chief in thrall.

He feared that good earl well,
And straightly bade them bind
Boethius in the prison-cell,
Sore troubled in his mind.

Ah! he had basked so long
Beneath a summer sky,
Ill could he bear such load of wrong,
So heavy did it lie.

Then was he full of woe,
Nor heeded honour more;
Reckless he flung himself below
Upon the dungeon floor;

Much mourning, there he lay,
Nor thought to break his chains,
But to the Lord by night and day
Sang thus in sighing strains.

This poem also is Alfred's own: and has not in any way been suggested by Boethius. It serves, in an able and effective manner, to introduce the Metres that follow, giving a slight historic sketch of Rome and its fortunes at the time of Boethius's imprisonment. In Gibbon's 'Decline and Fall' all the matters here hinted at are detailed at length: as it is not our wish to encumber this version with needless notes, the reader can if he pleases there refer to the history of Theodoric's invasion and government. Meanwhile, a few words in this version require explanation: e. g. 'sceldas læddon' 'led their shields,'—as we would now say of a general, he sent so many hundred 'bayonets' to the flank &c.: 'lind wigende' lime or linden-fighters,—so called from their bucklers or spear shafts having been made of lime-wood: 'hlaf' is a 'loaf'; 'ord' a 'beginning or cause': hence 'hlaford' is a 'patron' or a 'lord whose bread he ate:' 'heretoga' is a 'general or chieftain'; Boethius was in fact 'consul,' but, as in the case of 'atheling' for 'prince,' it is thought best to keep to the word of Alfred. So also of 'Amuling;' which signifies the descendant of Amul. Boethius (prænamed Anicius Manlius Torquatus Severinus, and allied to those noble families) flourished as a Roman citizen and a Christian writer toward the close of the fifth and the beginning of the

sixth century of our era. He was educated in Greece, where he spent the first years of his life, and married a Sicilian lady of Greek extraction, by name Elpis: these serve to explain the fact of his Philhellenism referred to in the text. After having filled the highest office of state himself and having lived to see his sons Patricius and Hypatius Consuls also, he was sent to a prison in Pavia, for having stood up against the usurpations of Theodoric. He appears to have lived only six months in the prison, and then to have been cruelly executed: but the greater part of those six months he must have spent both wisely and well in the elegant prose and ingenious verse of "The consolations of Philosophy." In the second volume of this edition, King Alfred's prose Boethius will be given in full to the reader: the present work concerns the poetry. John Bunyan, we may remember, as well as the holy Paul, severally have put a prison to the like good uses: but Boethius has been censured, and with some reason, for not adding (what Alfred every where supplies) the consolations of religion to those of philosophy. His metres, 26 in number, are varied and ingenious: they have been systematized by Theodore Pulman; but it would here be out of place to descant upon them: our text is Alfred, not Boethius.

II. A Sorrowful Fytte.

Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi,——Flebilis, heu, mœstos cogor inire modos.

Hwæt ic liotha fela,
Lustlice geo;
Sanc on sælum,
Nu sceal siofigende,
Wope gewæged,
Wreccea giomor,
Singan sar-cwidas.
Me thios siccetung hafath
Agæled—thes geocsa,
Thæt ic tha ged ne mæg
Gefegean swa fægre;
Theah ic fela gio tha
Sette soth cwida.
Thonne ic on sælum wæs,
Oft ic nu miscyrre
Cuthe spræce,
And theah uncuthre
Ær hwilum fond.
Me thas worald sæltha
Wel hwær blindne.
On this dimme hol.
Dysine forlæddon;
And me tha berypton
Rædes and frofre,
For heora untreowum.
The ic him æfre betst
Truwian sceolde,
Hi me towendon
Heora bacu bitere,
And heora blisse from.
Forhwam wolde ge,
Weoruld frynd mine,
Secgan oththe singan,
Thæt ic gesællic mon
Wære on weorulde?
Ne synt tha word soth,
Nu tha gesæltha ne magon
Simle gewunigan.

Lo! I sang cheerily
In my bright days,
But now all wearily
Chaunt I my lays;

Sorrowing tearfully,
Saddest of men,
Can I sing cheerfully,
As I could then?

Many a verity
In those glad times
Of my prosperity
Taught I in rhymes;
Now from forgetfulness
Wanders my tongue,
Wasting in fretfulness
Metres unsung.

Worldliness brought me here
Foolishly blind,
Riches have wrought me here
Sadness of mind;
When I rely on them
Lo! they depart,—
Bitterly, fie on them!
Rend they my heart.

Why did your songs to me,
World-loving men,
Say joy belongs to me
Ever as then?
Why did ye lyingly
Think such a thing,
Seeing how flyingly
Wealth may take wing?

The original is the opening poem of Boethius; whereof very little is here adopted by Alfred; but it is almost entirely an independent poem. This may fairly be regarded as a picture of Alfred's own mind in the dark times of his adversity. He reviews past glories,—hints at a confession of some of those early sins of worldliness and arrogance whereof Asser has spoken,—rebukes flatterers, and lies down alongside of Boethius in his dungeon, with that sympathy which a brotherhood in grief alone can give.

III. A Fytte of Despair.

Heu, quam praecipiti mersa profundo——Mens hebet, et propria luce relicta,

Æala on hu grimmum
And hu grundleasum
Seathe swinceth
Thæt sweorcende mod,
Thonne hit tha strongan
Stormas beatath,
Weoruld bisgunga:
Thonne hit winnende,
His agen leoht
An forlæteth,
And mid uus forgit

Thone ecan gefean
Thringth on tha thiestro
Thisse worulde,
Sorgum geswenced!
Swa is thissum nu
Mode gelumpen:
Nu hit mare ne wat
For Gode godes,
Buton gnornunge,
Fremdre worulde:
Him is frofre thearf.

Alas! in how grim
A gulf of despair,
Dreary and dim
For sorrow and care,
My mind toils along
When the waves of the world
Stormy and strong
Against it are hurl'd.

When in such strife
My mind will forget
Its light and its life
In worldly regret,
And through the night
Of this world doth grope
Lost to the light
Of heavenly hope.

Thus it hath now
Befallen my mind
I know no more how
God's goodness to find,
But groan in my grief
Troubled and tost,
Needing relief
For the world I have lost.

Here also we have almost all Alfred; it is in fact an expansion of the two first lines of Boethius as given above, and not a trans-

lation of the whole ode; which is of much more considerable length. Like the former morsel, it recals the days when our deserted king sang his sorrows to his lonely harp in the neat herd's hut, or on the marsh of Æthelingay.

IV. A Psalm to God.

O stelliferi conditor orbis,——Qui perpetuo nixus solio

Æala thu scippend
Scirra tungla,
Hefones and eorthan;
Thu on heah setle
Ecum ricsast.
And thu ealne hræthe
Hefon ymbhwearfest.
And thurh thine halige miht,
Tunglu genedest
Thæt hi the to herath!
Swylce seo sunne
Sweartra nihta
Thiostro adwæsceth,
Thurh thine meht.
Blacum leohte
Beorhte steorran
Mona gemetgath,
Thurh thinra meahta sped;
Hwilum eac tha sunnan.
Sines bereafath
Beorhtan leohtes,
Thonne hit gebyrigan maeg
Thæt swa geneahane
Nede weorthath.
Swelce thone mæran
Morgensteorran,
The we othre naman,
Æfensteorra
Nemnan herath;
Thu genedest thone,
Thæt he thære sunnan
Sith bewitige,
Geara gehwelce;
He gongan sceal,
Beforan feran.
Hwæt thu faeder wereest
Sumur lange dagas,
Swithe hate:
Thaem winter dagum
Wundrum sceorta
Tida getiohhast!
Thu thaem treowum selest
Suthan and westan;
Tha aer se swearta storm
Northan and eastan
Benumen haefde
Leafa gehwelces,
Thurh thone lathran wind.
Eala hwaet on eorthan,
Ealla gesceafta
Hyrath thinre haese;
Doth on heofonum swa some,
Mode and maegne;
Butan men anum,
Se with thinum willan
Wyrceth oftost.
Wella thu eca,
And thu almihtiga,
Ealra gesceafta,
Sceppend and reccend,
Ara thinum earmum,
Eorthan tudre,
Monna cynne,
Thurh thinra mehta sped!
Hwi thu ece God,
Æfre wolde,
Thaet sio wyrd on gewill,
Wendan sceolde
Yflum monnum,
Ealles swa swithe?
Hio ful oft dereth
Unscyldegum.
Sittath yfele men
Giond eorth-ricu,
On heah setlum;
Halige thriccath
Uuder heora fotum.
Firum uncuth,
Hwi sio wyrd swa wo
Wendan sceolde.
Swa sint gehydde,
Her on worulde,
Geond burga fela,
Beorhte craeftas.
Unrihtwise,
Eallum tidum,
Habbath on hospe,
Tha the him sindon
Rihtes wisran,
Rices wyrthran.
Bith thaet lease lot
Lange hwile
Bewrigen mid wrenchum.
Nu on worulde her,
Monnum ne derlath,
Mane athas.
Gif thu nu waldend ne wilt
Wirde steoran,
Ac on self-willo
Sigan laetest;
Thonne ic wat thaet te wile
Woruld-men tweogan,
Geond foldan-sceat,
Buton fea ane.
Eala min Dryhten.
Thu the ealle ofersihst
Worulde gesceafta.
Wlit nu on moncyn,
Mildum eagum;
Nuhi on monegum her
Worulde ythum,
Wynnath and swincath
Earme eorth-waran
Ara him nu tha!

O Thou, that art Maker of heaven and earth,
Who steerest the stars and hast given them birth,
For ever Thou reignest upon Thy high throne,
And turnest all swiftly the heavenly zone.

Thou, by Thy strong holiness, drivest from far
In the way that Thou willest each worshipping star;
And, through thy great power, the sun from the night
Drags darkness away by the might of her light.

The moon, at Thy word, with his pale-shining rays
Softens and shadows the stars as they blaze,
And even the Sun of her brightness bereaves
Whenever upon her too closely he cleaves.

So also the Morning and Evening Star
Thou makest to follow the Sun from afar,
To keep in her pathway each year evermore,
And go as she goeth in guidance before.

Behold too, O Father, Thou workest aright
To summer hot day-times of long-living light,
To winter all wondrously orderest wise
Short seasons of sunshine with frost on the skies.

Thou givest the trees a south-westerly breeze,
Whose leaves the swart storm in its fury did seize
By winds flying forth from the east and the north
And scattered and shattered all over the earth.

On earth and in heaven each creature and kind
Hears Thy behest with might and with mind,
But Man and Man only, who oftenest still
Wickedly worketh against Thy wise will.

For ever Almighty One, Maker and Lord,
On us, wretched earthworms, Thy pity be pour'd;
Why wilt Thou that welfare to sinners should wend,
But lettest weird ill the unguilty ones rend?

Evil men sit, each on earth's highest seat,
Trampling the holy ones under their feet;
Why good should go crookedly no man can say,
And bright deeds in crowds should lie hidden away.

The sinner at all times is scorning the just,
The wiser in right, and the worthier of trust;
Their leasing for long while with fraud is beclad;
And oaths that are lies do no harm to the bad.

O Guide, if Thou wilt not steer fortune amain
But lettest her rush so self-will'd and so vain,
I know that the worldly will doubt of Thy might,
And few among men in Thy rule will delight.

My Lord, overseeing all things from on high
Look down on mankind with mercy's mild eye,
In wild waves of trouble they struggle and strive,
Then spare the poor earthworms, and save them alive!

This is one of the best known of King Alfred's paraphrases, and is almost worthy of its holy subject; for elevation of sentiment and breadth of view not easily exceeded by any uninspired writer. The metre here adopted is a long line only in appearance; for it has a regular break in the middle, and is in fact nearly the same as the 149th psalm: one very appropriate in an address to the Glorious Creator.

The Sun and Moon exchange genders in the Anglo-Saxon language; as in the modern German. Mr Fox refers us to an asserted instance of this interchange in Shakspeare, 1st HENRY IV, *A.* 1. *S.* 2, which however is very doubtful; where Prince Hal likens "the blessed Sun himself to a fair hot wench in a crimson taffety." It is much more to the point to take notice that in Hebrew the same peculiarity of genders is observable, where the moon is masculine: while the sun is usually feminine. We may add this verbal evidence to those adduced by Turner, bearing upon the Asiatic origin of the Saxons, whom he, with great probability, considers to be the Sacæ of Herodotus.

V. Of Trouble and its Cure.

Nubibus atris,——Condita nullum

Thu meaht be thaere sunna n
Sweotole gethencean,
And be aeghwelcum
Othrum steorran,
Thara the aefter bungum
Beorhtost scineth ;
Gif him wan fore
Wolcen hangath,
Ne maegen hi swa leohtne
Leoman ansendan,
Ær se thicca mist
Thinra weorthe.
Swa oft smylte sae
Sutherne wind,
Graege glas-hluthre
Grimme gedrefeth :
Thonne hie gemengath,
Micla ysta
Onhrerath hron-mere ;
Hrioh bith thonne
Seo the aer gladu
On-siene waes,
Swa oft aespringe
Utawealleth
Of clife harum,
Col and hlutor,
And gereclice
Rihte floweth,
Irneth with his eardes ;
Oth him on innan felth
Muntes maegen-stan,
And him on middan geligeth,
Atrendlod of thaem torre.
He on tu siththan
Tosceaden wyrth,
Scir bith gedrefed,
Burna geblonden ;
Broc bith onwended,
Of his riht ryne,
Rythum toflowen.
Swa nu tha thiostre
Thinre heortan willath
Minre leohtan
Lare withstondan :
And thin mod-gethonc
Miclum gedrefan.
Ac gif thu nu wilnast,
Thæt thu wel mæge,
Thaet sothe leoht,
Sweotole oncnawan,
Leohte geleafan ;
Thu forlaetan scealt.
Idle ofer-saeltha,
Unnytne gefean ;
Thu scealt eac yfelne ege
An-forlaetan,
Woruld-earfotha ;
Ne most thu wesan for thaem
Ealles to ormod.
Ne thu the aefre ne laet
Wlenca gewaecan,
The laes thu weorthe for him.
Mid ofer-mettum
Eft gesceuded,
And to upahafen
For orsorgum,
Woruld-gesaelthum
Ne eft to waclice
Geortreowe
Æniges godes :
Thonne the for woruldo
Witherwearda maest
Thinga threage ;
And thu the selfum
Swithost onsitte
Forthaem simle bith
Se mod-sefa
Miclum gebunden mid
Gedrefnesse :
Gif hine dreccean mot
Thissa yfla hwaether,
Innan swencan.
Forthaem tha twegen tregan,
Teoth to somne
With thaet mod foran
Mistes dwoleman ;
Thaet hit seo ece ne mot
Hinan geond scinan [mistum,
Sunne for thaem sweartum
Ær thaem hi geswithrad weor-
[then.

Ye may learn by the stars and the sun
Shining on cities so bright,
If the welkin hangs dreary and dun,
To wait in the mist for the light.

So too, the calm sea, glassy-grey,
The southwind all grimly makes riot,
And whirlpools in strife stir away
The whale-pool that once was so quiet.

So also, outwelleth a spring,
All clear from the cliff and all cool,
Till midway some mountain may fling
A rock to roll into the pool.

Then broken asunder will seem
The rill so clear-running before,
That brook is turn'd out of its stream,
And flows in its channel no more.

So now, in thy darkness of mind,
Thou willest my wisdom to spurn,
Withstanding, by trouble made blind,
The lessons thou never wilt learn.

Yet now, if ye will, as ye may,
The true and pure light clearly know,
Let go the vain joys of to-day,
The weal that brings nothing but woe.

And drive away bad unbelief,
The fears of the world and its care,
And be not thou given to grief,
Nor yield up thy mind to despair.

Nor suffer thou glad-going things
To puff thee with over-much pride,
Nor worldliness lifting thy wings
To lure thee from meekness aside:

And let not, too weakly again,
Ills make thee despair of the good,
When hunted by peril and pain,
And haunted by misery's brood.

For always the mind of a man
Is bound up with trouble below,
If riches or poverty can
Engraft it with sin or with woe.

Because the twin evils make dun
The mind in a misty swart shroud,
That on it eternity's sun
Is dim till it scatters the cloud.

It really is a pity to rob Alfred of his originality by representing all or any of these poems as servile translations from Boethius, or

even free paraphrases. The truth is, a good deal of ingenuity is required to discover in many cases a resemblance at all. Alfred has taken up the tune of Boethius, and begins a theme in the key-note of the Latin, but is soon hurried away by the rapidly recurring alliterations of his own free harp and tongue and so becomes original. With respect to Anglo-Saxon poetry, in most instances it is far from an easy task to discover much regularity of rhythm, or anything like exactitude of rhyme. The present metre however is an exception; it pleases the eye and the ear alike. Generally speaking, doubtless, a great deal depended on the bardic harp and the inspiration of the moment: rhyme and rhythm which now in our ignorance escape us, and an alliterative jingle, which our modern taste despises, might have been made acceptable by stress and accent properly laid, by eloquent pauses and stirring bursts of Song. How meagre and dull, for instance, our 'God save the Queen' would look, if we knew nothing of the noble air to which it is set; and how much to further disadvantage would it be seen, if in the lapse of centuries transcribers had here and there omitted a rhyme or a line, or had jumbled them all together, so as to have hidden away the rhythm! Suppose such a case as that Mr Haynes Bayley may, centuries hence, (if this *αἰων* tasts so long,) find an editor to mark out one of his best songs in the following learned manner;

O no we never
mention her her
name is never
heard my lips are
now forbid to speak that
once familiar
word from sport
to sport.....

This instance may provoke a smile,—but it is instructive notwithstanding; possibly, the Junian manuscript and others may do our Alfred similar injustice; and, at any rate, the discoverer is still to arise who shall help us to the tunes which doubtless rendered all harmonious. Perhaps we know as yet very little about the matter: for example; Dr Hickes, one of our most learned scholars in this line, maintains that the Anglo-Saxon rhythm is reducible to the rules of Latin prosody: so ridiculous

does this seem to another equally distinguished man, Mr Tyrwhitt, the editor of Chaucer, that he does not scruple to say he can make out no metre at all in the so called poems, which are merely an inflated style of prose; while a more recent living writer, by way of reconciling such contrarieties, marks out his lines indeed with the symbols of dactyls, spondees, trochees, and anapæsts, but unluckily the words are too stubborn for his gratuitous prosody. The case seems to be, that the metres were very various; emphasis and harp-accompaniment made up for many a syllable; the thing would be monotonous in uninspired hands, but stirring enough under the touch of genius; which might rise or fall, be tender or impassioned, forte or piano, at its own free will. At present our wisdom is to take random shots at the true metre, if existing and discoverable at all, by translating Alfred into a great variety, as here done: and for all else, the nearest approximation we can make seems to amount to such a play of words as 'whirlpool' and 'whalepool,' 'scattered' and 'shattered' and the like; together with short staccato sentences; interweaved synonymes, and parallel phrases; and, now and then, a sort of dancing measure. The writer however throughout has desired to make the metrical part (whatever may have been his Parnassian pains in this respect,) a secondary matter: the first thing to be considered every where is the Wise King's mind and meaning.

VI. Of Change.

Quum polo Phœbus roseis quadrigis——Lucem spargere cœperit,

Tha se Wisdom eft
Word hord onleac,
Sang soth-cwidas,
And thus selfa cwæth.
Thonne sio sunne
Sweotolost scineth,
Hadrost of hefone;
Hræthe bioth athistrod
Ealle ofir eorthan
Othre steorran:
Forthaem hiora birhtu ne bith
Auht [birhtnesse]
To gesettane
With thære sunnan leoht.
Thonne smolte blæwth
Suthan and westan wind,
Under wolcnum;

Thonne weaxeth hrathe
Feldes blostman,
Fægen thaet hi moton.
Ac se stearca storm,
Thonne he strong cymth,
Northan and eastan,
He genimeth hrathe.
Thære rosan wlite.
And eac tha ruman sæ,
Northerne yst,
Nede gebæded,
Thæt hio strange geond styred
On stathu beateth.
Eala thaet on eorthan,
Auht fæstlices
Weorces on worulde,
Me wunath aefre!

Then did Wisdom again
Unlock his word-hoard well,

And sang in soothful strain
The truths he had to tell.

When with clearest blaze
The bright sun shines in the sky,
The stars must quench their rays
Over the earth so high;

For that, set in the light
Of her that rules by day,
Their brightness is not bright,
But dimly dies away.

When the wind south-west
Under the cloud blows low,
Field-flowers wax their best
Fain to be glad and grow.

But when East and by North
The stark storm strongly blows,
Speedily drives he forth
All beauty from the rose.

So, with a stern needs-be
The northern blast doth dash
And beat the wide waste sea
That it the land may lash.

Alas, that ever on earth
Nothing is fast and sure;
No work is found so worth
That it for ever endure.

Very little need here he added, beyond the perpetual protest against the idea that Alfred does more than take hints from Boethius: justice is done to neither side by the word translation, or even paraphrase: for Alfred often omits two thirds of Boethius, and makes up by two-thirds of his own. To shew how united our modern and ancient English are, there are nearly forty

words in this short poem unchanged from the royal minstrel's Anglo Saxon: and nearly the same ratio will be found to pervade most of the other metres.

VII. Of Content, and Humbleness.

Quisquis volet perennem——Cautus ponere sedem,

Tha ongon se Wisdom
His gewunan fylgan;
Glio-wordum gol,
Gyd æt spelle;
Song soth-cwida
Sumne tha geta.
Cwæth he ne herde,
Thæt on heanne munt,
Monnaænig
Meahte asettan
Healle hrof-fæste.
Ne thearf eac hæletha nan
Wenan thaes weorces,
Thaet he wisdom mæge
With ofermetta
Æfre gemengan.
Herdes thu aefre,
Thaet te aenig mon
On sond beorgas
Settan meahte
Faeste healle?
Ne maeg eac fira nan
Wisdom timbran,
Thaer thaer woruld-gitsung
Beorg oferbraedeth.
Baru sond willath
Ren forswelgan.
Swa deth ricra nu
Grundleas gitsung
Gilpes and aehta,
Gedrinceth to dryggum
Dreosendne welan:
And theah thæs thearfan ne bith
Thurst aceled.
Ne maeg haeletha gehwaem,
Hus on munte
Lange gelaestan;
Forthaem him lungre on
Swift wind swapeth.
Ne bith sond thon ma.
With micelne ren,
Manna aengum,
Huses hirde;
Ac hit hreosan wile,
Sigan sond aefter rene.
Swa bioth anra gehwaes
Monna mod-sefan,
Miclum awegede,
Of hiora stede styrede,
Thonne he strong dreceth
Wind under wolcnum,
Woruld-earfotha:
Oththe bi eft se retha
Ren onhrereth
Sumes ymbhogan,
Ungemet gemen.
Ac se the tha ecan
Agan wille,
Sothan gesaeltha,
He sceal swithe flion
Thisse worulde wlite;
Wyrce him siththan
His modes hus,
Thær he mæge findan
Eathmetta stan,
Ungemetfæstne
Grund-weal gearone:
Se to-glidan ne thearf,
Theah hit wecge wind,
Woruld-earfotha,
Oththe ymbhogena,
Ormete ren.
Forthæm on thære dene
Drihten selfa,
Thara eadmetta
Eardfæst wunigath.
Thær se Wisdom á
Wunath on gemyndum.
Forthon orsorg lif
Ealnig lædath
Woruld-men wise,
Buton wendinge,
Thonne he eall forsihth
Eorthlicu good;
And eac thara yfela
Orsorh wunath;
Hopath to tham ecum
The thær æfter cumath.
Hine thonne æghwonan,
Ælmihtig Good
Singallice,
Simle gehealdeth,
Anwunigendne,
His agenum
Modes geselthum,
Thurh metodes gife:
Theah hine se wind
Woruld-earfotha
Swithe swence,
And hine singale
Gemen gaele;
Thonne him grimme on,
Woruld-saeltha wind
Wrathe blaweth;
Theah the hine ealneg,
Sa ymbhoga thyssa
Woruld-saeltha
Wrathe dreoce.

Again, as his wont, began Wisdom a song,
And spoke out his spells as he wander'd along.
He said, On a mountain no man can be skill'd
With a roof weather-proof a high hall to upbuild.

Moreover, let no man think ever to win
By mixing pure wisdom with over-proud sin.
Heard ye that any built firmly on sand,
Or caught hold of wisdom with gain-getting hand?

The light soil is greedy to swallow the rain;
So now doth the rich, in his measureless gain
Of honours and havings, drink deep of such weal,
Yea, down to the dregs, and still thirsty will feel.

A house on a hill-top may never long stay,
For quickly the swift wind shall sweep it away;
And a house on the sand is no better at all;
In spite of the house-herd, in rain it shall fall.

So, failing and fickle is every mind
When rack'd by the rage of this world-trouble wind;
And measureless cares, as a quick-dropping rain
Unstopping, stir up the mind's welkin with pain.

But he who would have everlasting true bliss,
Must fly from the glare of a world such as this:
And then let him make a strong home for his mind
Wherever true Lowliness' rock he can find;

A settled ground-anchor that never shall slide,
Though trouble attack it by tempest and tide;
For that, in Lowliness' valley so fair
The Lord, and mind-wisdom for ever live there.

Therefore leads always a quiet-like life
The wise in the world without changes or strife,
When heedless alike of earth's good and earth's ill,
He watches in hope of an after-world still.

Such an one evermore God ever kind
Happily keeps in the calm of his mind;
Though wild winds of sorrow against him are hurl'd,
Though always annoyed by the cares of the world,
Though wrathful and grim are these trouble-dark gales,
And Care, in its anguish, or anger assails.

By way of comparing Alfred with Boethius, in a fair average instance, here follows a literal translation of the Latin ode whereof the lines above,—also literally rendered from the Anglo Saxon,—are commonly supposed to be a paraphrase.

"Whoever prudently desires to build an everlasting house, and firmly wills that it be not thrown down by the blasts of roaring Eurus, and ventures not to despise the sea threatening with waves, let him avoid the top of a high mountain, and thirsty sands: the former froward Auster drives against with all his might: the latter, dissolving, refuse to sustain the pendulous mass. Avoiding the dangerous portion of a luxurious residence, remember for stability to fix thy house on the humble rock. Though the wind mingling the sea with ruins should roar like thunder, thou, happily hidden in the strength of a quiet rampart, shalt live thy life serenely, and laugh at the wrath of the sky."

As this is so very dissimilar from the poem above, the reader will of course suppose that our present version is at fault;—but, whatever other deficiencies it must confess to, that of unfaithfulness is not one: we have honestly represented Alfred, with scarcely a word added for rhyme's sake. And how beautifully does the Christian King improve on the philosophizing senator: we are here reading the blest experiences of one taught to be humble in the school of adversity.

VIII. Of Primal Innocence &c.

Felix nimium prior ætas,——Contenta fidelibus arvis.

Sona swa se Wisdom
Thas word hæfde
Swetole areahte,
He tha siththan ongan
Singan soth-cwidas,
And thus selfa cwæth.
Hwæt sio forme eld
Fold-buendum
Geond eorthan-sceat,
Æghwam dohte!
Tha tha anra gehwæm
On eorth-wæstmum
Genoh thuhte:
Nis hit nu tha swelc.
Næron tha geond weorulde
welige hamas,
Ne mislice
Mettas ne drincas.
Ne hi thara hrægla
Huru ne gemdon,
The nu driht-guman
Diorost lætath;
Forthæm hiora næniġ
Næs tha gieta.
Ne hi ne gesawon
Sund-buende,
Ne ymbutan hi
Awer ne herdon.
Hwæt hi firenlusta
Frecene wæron,
Buton swa hi meahton
Gemetlicost
Tha gecynd began,
The him Crist gesceop.
And hi æne on daeġe
Æton symle,
On æfen-tid,
Eorthan waestmas,
Wudes and wyrta.
Nalles win druncon
Scir of steape;
Næs tha scealca nan
The mete oththe drinc
Maengan cuthe,
Waeter with hunige.
Ne heora waeda thon ma
Sioloce siowian:
Ne hi siaro-craeftum
Godweb giredon.
Ne hi gimreced
Setton searolicc.
Ac hi simle him,
Eallum tidum,
Ute slepon,
Under beam-sceade.
Druncon burnan waeter,
Calde wellan.
Naenig cepa ne seah
Ofer ear-geblond,
Ellendne wearod;
Ne huru ymbe scip-hergas
Sae-tilcas ne herdon:
Ne furthum fira nan
Ymb gefeoht sprecan.
Naes theos eorthe besmiten
Awer tha geta
Beornes blode.
The hi ne bill-rude.
Ne furthum wundne wer,
Weoruld-buende
Gesawan under sunnan.
Naenig siththan waes
Weorth on weorulde,
Gif mon his willan ongeat
Yfelne mid eldum:
He waes aeghwaem lath
Eala thaet hit wurde!
Oththe wolde God,
Thaet on eorthan nu.
Ussa tida,
Geond thas widan weoruld,
Waeren aeghwaer aweice,
Under sunnan!
Ac hit is saemre nu,
Thaet theos gitsunc hafath
Sumena gehwelces,
Mod amerred:
Thaet he maran ne recth:
Ac hit on witte
Weallende byrnth,
Efne sio gitsung
The naenne grund hafath;
Swearte swaefeth,
Sumes on lice
Efne tham munte,
The nu monna bearn
Etne hatath;
Se on iglonde
Sicilia
Swefle byrneth,
Thaet mon helle fyr
Hateth wide
Forthaem hit simle bith,
Sin-byrnende;
And ymbutan hit
Othra stowa
Blate forbærnth,
Biteran lege.
Eala hwaet se forma
Feoh-gitsere
Waere on worulde,
Se thas wong-stedas
Grof aefter golde,
And aefter gim-cynnum;
Hwaet he frecnu gestreon
Funde maenegum,
Bewrigen on weorulde,
Waetere oththe eorthan!

Soon as Wisdom thus had sung,
He began, with plainer tongue,
Sooth to sing his sayings thus,
And himself to speak to us.
O how full of blessing then
Was the first glad age to men!

When earth's fruitful plenty came
(Not as now,) to all the same;
When through all the world were there
No great halls of costly care;
No rich feasts of meat or drink;
Neither did they heed or think
Of such jewels, then unknown,
As our lordlings long to own;
Nor did seamen aye behold
Nor had heard of gems or gold.
More; with frugal mind they fared;
And for pleasures only cared,
As at Christ's and kindred's voice
They were bidden to rejoice.
Once in the day, at eventide,
They ate earth's fruits, and nought beside;
No wine they drank, their stoup was clear;
No cunning slave was mingling near
Meats and drinks, to glut their greed,
Or make the heated honeymead;
No silk-sewn weeds wish'd they to wear,
Nor good-webs dyed with crafty care
Nor set on high with skilful power
The mighty dome, or lofty tower.
But, under the sweet shade of trees
They slept at all times well at ease,
And, when thirsting, gladly took
Water from the running brook;
Never trader wandered o'er
Seas to seek a foreign shore,
Never had one heard indeed
Of ships to till the briny mead;
Nowhere yet with blood of men
Was the earth besmitten then,
Nowhere had the sun beheld
Steel that struck, or wound that well'd.
Those who work'd an evil will
Won not worship for their ill;
All would then have loathed them sore:
O that this could be once more!

O that God would now on earth
Make us all so purely worth!
But alas, men now are worse;
Lust of getting sets a curse
As a clog upon each mind,
Reckless other good to find.
Lust of gain unfathomed glows
In the heart with bubbling throes;
Swart it lies, and sweltering deep,
Like old Etna's boiling heap,
Which, in Sicily's broad isle,
Burns with brimstone many a mile,
So that men around it tell,
Of its fires as fires of hell,
For that ever still it burns
Bitter everywhere by turns.
Woe! that ever should have been
In this world the sinner seen,
Who was first so basely bold
As to dig for gems and gold:
Cares for many then he found
Darkly hidden in the ground,
Dangerous wealth and deadly worth
In the deeps of sea and earth.

Alfred and Boethius get nearer together in this ode, which is not wonderful, as there is very little to draw out the wise thoughtfulness of Alfred's mind. Accordingly, he cared not to suffer his harp to make digressions: it is merely a contrast between the golden age and the age of gold.

IX. Nero.

Novimus quantas dederit ruinas——Urbe flammata, patribusque cæsis,

Hwæt we ealle witon
Hwelce aerleste,
Ge neah ge feor,
Neron worhte,
Romwara cyning,
Tha his rice wæs
Hehst under heofonum,
To hryre monegum,
Waelhreowes gewed
Wæs ful wide cuth,
Unriht-hæmed,
Arleasta fela,
Man and morthor,
Misdæda worn,
Unrihtwises
Inwid-thoncas!
He het him to gamene,
Geara forbaernan,
Romæna burig,
Sio his rices wæs
Ealles ethel-stol.
He for unsnyttrum,
Wolde fandian,
Gif thæt fyr meahte
Lixan swa leohte,
And swa longe eac,
Readra settan,
Swæ he Romane
Secgan geherde,
Thæt on sume tide,
Troia burg.
Ofertogen hæfde
Lega leohtost,
Lengest burne
Hama under hefonum.
Næs thæt herlic dæd,
Thæt hine awelces gamenes
Gilpan lyste,
Tha he ne earnade
Elles wuhte;
Buton thæt he wolde.
Ofer wer-thiode,
His anes huru.
Anwald cythan.
Esc hit gesælde,
Æt sumum cierre,
Thæt se ilca het
Ealle acwellan
Tha ricostan
Romana witan,
And tha æthelestan
Eorl gebyrdum,
The he on thæm folce
Gefrigen hæfde:
And on uppan
Agene brothor,
And his modor mid,
Meca ecgum,
Billum of-beatan.
He his bryde ofslog
Self mid sweorde:
And he symle wæs
Micle the blithra
On breost cofan,
Thonne he swylces morthres
Mæst gefremede.
Nalles sorgode,
Hwæther siththan á,
Mihtig Drihten
Ametan wolde
Wrece be gewyrhtum,
Woh-fremmendum.
Ac he on ferthe fægn.
Facnes and searuwa.
Waelhriow wunode.
Wiold emne swa theah
Ealles thisses maeran
Middan-geardes.
Swa swa lyft and lagu
Land ymbelyppath,
Gar-secg embe-gyrt
Gumena rice
Secge sitlu;
Suth-east and west,
Oth tha northmestan
Naessan on eorthan;
Eall thæt Nerone,
Nede oththe lustum,
Heatho-rinca gehwilc,
Heran sceolde.
He hæfde him to gamene
Thonne he on gylp astag,
Hu he eorth-cyningas
Yrmde and cwelmde.
Wenst thu thaet se anwald
Eathe ne meahte
Godes aelmihtiges
Thone gelp-scathan,
Rice beraedan,
And bereafian
His anwaldes,
Thurh tha ecan meaht;
Oththe him his yfeles
Elles gestioran?
Eala gif he wolde.
Thaet he wel meahte,
Thaet unriht him,
Eathe forbiodan!
Eawla thaet se hlaford
Hefig gloc slepte,
Sware on tha swyran
Sinra thegena.
Ealra thara haeletha.
The on his tidum
Geond thas laenan worold
Liban sceoldon.
He on unscyldgum
Eorla blode
His sweord selede
Swithe gelome.
Thaer waes swithe sweotol,
Thaet we saedon oft,
Thaet se anwald ne deth
Awiht godes,
Gif se wel nele
The his geweald hafath.

All know too well, abroad or near at home,
What evils Nero wrought, that king of Rome,
When, highest under heav'n, his rule was then
The dread and overthrow of many men.
The madness of this savage bred betimes
Lust, murder, vile misdeeds, a bad man's crimes;

He gave the word of old to wrap in flame
Rome's self,his kingdom's seat,to make him game;
Wishing in wicked wantonness to know
Whether the fire so long and red would glow
As erst in Troy, he heard that Romans said,
The mounting fire burn'd longest and most red.
Base deed, in such fierce frolic to delight,
Aimless and vain, unless to mark his might.

And, once it happened, at a certain hour,
He would again show forth his frantic power,
And bade the richest men of Rome be slain,
Each earl of highest birth, each wisest thane:
With swords and bills he hewed until they died
His mother, brother, yea, and his own bride,—
Ever the blither in his own bad breast
When he had done such murders cruellest.
Nothing reck'd he that soon the mighty Lord
Would mete out wrath to sinners so abhorr'd,
But in his mind, that fed on wicked wiles,
Remain'd a savage, wreath'd in cunning smiles.

Still, even he so ruled this middle earth
Far as the land hath air and sea for girth,
Far as the sea surrounds all men and things,
The seats of warriors and the thrones of kings,
That from the South and East and furthest West
And Earth's high head-land reaching northernest,
All to this Nero willing worship gave,
And every chief by force became his slave,
Till 'twas his game,when pride had puff'd his mind,
To hunt and kill the kings of human-kind.

But thinkest thou that God's all holy might
Could not with ease this haughty sinner smite,
And scathe his pride, and drive him from the helm,
Or quench his guilt, and so berid the realm?
O that he would, as well he might with ease,
Ever forbid such wrongful works as these!
Woe, that this lord should cast so heavy a yoke
On all men's necks, both thanes and serving folk,

Who, for the harmful season of his power,
Lived in this world their quickly passing hour:
Woe, that his sword was often weltering then
With blood of highborn earls and guiltless men.

Clearly in this, our saying shone out bright,
That power can do no good, as well it might,
If he who rules, wills not to rule aright.

Here also Alfred stays with Boethius, so long as he is giving the portrait of an evil king; but the moral of the picture is all his own. For some strange reason or other, Boethius, though a Christian, perpetually forgets that Religion is the highest form of Philosophy.

X. Of Fame and Death.

Quicumque solam mente præcipiti petit,——Summamque credit gloriam;

Gif nu hæletha hwone
Hlisan lyste;
Unnytne gelp
Agan wille;
Thonne ic hine wolde
Wordum biddan,
Thæt he hine æghwonon
Utan ymbe thohte,
Sweotole ymb sawe,
Suth-east and west.
Hu widgil sint
Wolcnum ymbutan,
Heofones hwealfe,
Hige-cnotrum
Mæg eathe thincan
Thæt theos eorthe sie,
Eall for thæt other,
Ungemet lytel,
Theah hio unwisum
Widgel thince,
—On stede stronglic,
Steorlcasum men.
Theah mæg thone wisan
On gewit-locan,
Thære gitsunge
Gelpes scamian,
Thonne hine thæs hlisan
Heardost lysteth.
And he theah ne mæg
Thone tobredan,
Ofer thas nearowan,
Nænige thinga
Eorthan-sceatas.
Is thæt unnet gelp!
Eala ofermodan,
Hwi eow alyste,
Mid eowrum swiran,
Selfra willum
Thæt swære gloc,
Symle underlutan?
Hwy ge ymb thæt unnet
Ealnig swincen,
Thæt ge thone hlisan
Habban tiliath,
Ofer thioda ma
Thonne eow thearf sie?
Theah eow nu gesæle,
Thæt eow suth oththe north,
Tha ytmestan
Eorth-buende
On monig thiodisc
Miclum herien.
Theah hwa æthele sie,
Eorl gebyrdum.
Welum geweorthath,
And on wlencum thio,
Duguthum diore;
Death thæs ne scrifeth,
Thonne him rum forlæt
Rodora waldend.
Ac he thone welegan
Wædlum gelice,

Efn mærne gedeth
Ælces thinges.
Hwær sint nu thæs wisan
Welandes ban.
Thæs gold-smithes.
The wæs geo mærost?
Forthy ic cwæth thæs wisan,
Welandes ban:
Forthy ængum ne mæg
Eorth-buendra
Se cræft losian,
The him Crist onlænth.
Ne mæg mon æfre thy eth
Ænne wræccan,
His cræftes beniman,
The mon oncerran mæg
Sunnan onwifan,
And thisne swiftan rodor,
Of his riht-ryne,
Rinca ænig!
Hwa wat nu thæs wisan
Welandes ban;
On hwelcum in hlæwa
Hrusan theccen?
Hwær is nu se rica
Romana wita,
And se aroda
The we ymb sprecath;
Hiora heretoga
Se gehaten wæs,
Mid thæm burhwarum,
Brutus nemned?
Hwær is eac se wisa,
And se weorth-georna,
And se fæst-ræda
Folces hyrde:
Se wæs uthwita
Ælces thinges
Cene and cræftig,

Thæm wæs Caton nama?
Hi wæron gefyrn
Forth-gewitene.
Nat nænig mon
Hwær hi nu sindon.
Hwæt is hiora here,
Buton se hlisa an
Se is eac to lytel;
Swelcra lariowa,
Forthæm tha mago-rincas
Maran wyrthe wæron,
On worulde.
Ac hit is wyrse nu,
Thæt geond thas eorthan,
Æghwær sindon
Hiora gelican;
Hwon ymb spræce:
Sume openlice
Ealle forgitene.
Thæt hi se hlisa
Hiw-cuthe ne mæg
Fore-mære weras,
Forth gebrengan.
Theah ge nu wenen,
And wilnigen,
Thæt ge lange tid
Libban moten:
Hwæt iow æfre thy bet
Bio oththe wince;
Forthæm the nane forlet
Theah hit lang thince,
Death æfter dogor rime,
Thonne he hæfth Drihtnes leafe?
Hwæt thonne hæbbe
Hæletha ænig
Gum æt thæm gilpe,
Gif hine gegripan mot
Se eca death,
Æfter thissum worulde?

If any man will be so vain
As now for fame to lust,
The empty praise of men to gain
And in such folly trust,

Him would I bid to gaze around
The circle of the sky,
And think how far above the ground
The heav'n is wide and high.

How small this world to wisdom's ken
Set against that so vast,
Though ours may seem to witless men
Huge, wide, and sure to last.

Yet may the wise in heart feel shame
That once his thirst was strong
For silly greediness of fame
That never lasteth long.

Such lust of praise he may not spread
Over this narrow earth,

'Tis folly all, and of the dead,
A glory nothing worth.

And you, O proud, why wish ye still
And strive with all your care
The heavy yoke of your own will
Upon your necks to bear ?

Why will ye toil yet more and more
For glory's useless prize,
And reach your rule from shore to shore
Unneeded and unwise ?

Though now ye reign from South to North
And, with an earnest will,
The furthest dwellers on the earth
Your dread behests fulfil.

The greatest earl of wealthiest praise
However rich or high,
Death cares not for him, but obeys
The Ruler of the sky,

With even hand right swift to strike,
At His allowing word,
The rich man and the poor alike
The lowborn and his lord.

Where are the bones of Weland now,
So shrewd to work in gold ?
Weland, though wise, to death must bow
That greatest man of old :

Though wise, I say ; for what Christ gives
Of wisdom to a man,
That craft with him for ever lives
Which once on earth began :

And sooner shall a man's hand fetch
The sun from her due course,
Than steal from any dying wretch
His cunning skill by force.

Who then can tell, wise Weland's bones
Where now they rest so long?
Beneath what heap of earth and stones
Their prison is made strong?

Rome's wisest son, be-known so well,
Who strove her rights to save,
That mighty master, who can tell
Where Brutus has a grave?

So too, the man of sternest mould,
The good, the brave, the wise,
His people's shepherd, who hath told
Of Cato, where he lies?

Long are they dead: and none can know
More of them than their name:
Such teachers have too little now
Of all their worthy fame.

Now too, forgotten everywhere,
The like to them have found
But little kindly speech or care
From all the world around;

So that, however wise in worth
Such foremost men may stand,
No home-felt praises bring them forth
For fame throughout the land.

Though now ye wish long time to live,
And pine to have it so,
What better blessing can it give
Than now ye find below?

As Death lets none go free at last
When God allows his power,
If Death For-ever follows fast,
How short is this world's hour!

In the second volume of the Jubilee Edition (Cardale's Bo
thius,) we shall be told all about this Weland, whom to ple

his people and perhaps himself, (for Alfred was a worker in gold also,) we find here substituted for the Fabricius of the Latin ode:

Ubi nunc fidelis ossa Fabricii jacent?

Alfred allows himself to go off at a tangent, as playing upon the word faber a workman, to praise the famous goldsmith, whom the poet's harp alone has now immortalized.

XI. Of God's Wise Government.

Quod mundus stabili fide——Concordes variat vices,

An sceppend is,
Butan ælcum tweon,
Se is eac wealdend
Woruld-gesceafta,
Heofones and eorthan,
And heah sæ:
And ealra thara
The thær in wuniath
Ungesewenlicra,
And eac swa same,
Thara the we eagum
On lociath,
Ealra gesceafta.
Se is ælmihtig;
Thæm oleccath
Ealle gesceafte,
The thæs ambehtes
Awuht cunnon.
Ge eac swa same
Tha thæs suht nyton,
Thæt hi thæs theodnes
Theowas sindon.
Se us gesette
Sido and theawas,
Eallum gesceaftum
Unawendendne,
Singallice;
Sibbe gecynde;
Tha tha he wolde,
Thæt thæt he wolde,
Swa lange swa he wolde,
Thæt hit wesan sceolde,
Swa hit eac to worulde sceal
Wunian forth.
Forthæm æfre ne magon
Tha unstillan
Woruld-gesceafta,
Weorthan gestilde;
Of thæm ryne onwend,
The him rodera weard
Endebyrdes,
Eallum gesette
Hæfth se alwealda
Ealle gesceafta
Gebæt mid his bridle;
Hafath butu gedon;
Ealle gemanode,
And eac getogen;
Thæt hi ne moten
Ofer metodes est
Æfre gestillan:
Ne eft eallunga
Swithor stirian,
Thonne hi sigora-weard
His geweald-lether
Wille onlæten.
He hafath tham bridle
Butu befangen
Heoton and eorthan,
And eall holma-begong.
Swa hæfth geheathærod,
Hefon-rices weard
Mid his anwealde,
Ealle gesceafta;
Thæt hiora ægh wilc
With other winth;
And theah winnende,
Wrethiath fæste
Æghwilc other,
Utan ymbclyppeth,
Thy læs hi toswifen.
Forthæm hi symle sculon
Thone ilcan ryne
Eft gecyrran,
The æt frymthe,
Fæder getiode,
And swa edniwe,
Eft gewiorthan;
Swa hit nu fagath,—
Frean eald geweorc;
Thæt te winnende.
Witherweard gesceaft,
Fæste sibbe
Forth anhealdath.
Swa nu Fyr and wæter,
Folde and lagu stream,
Manigu othru gesceaft
Efn swithe him,
Giond thas widan worulde,
Winnath betweox him,
And swa theah magon
Hiora thegnunga,
And geferscipe,
Fæste gehealdan.
Nis hit no thæt an,
Thæt swa eathe mæg
Witherweard gesceaft
Wesan ætgædere,
Symbel geferan:
Ac hit is sellicre,
Thæt hiora ænig ne mæg
Butan othrum bion;
Ac sceal wuhta gehwilc
Witherweardes hwæt-hwugu
Habban under heofonum,
Thæt his hige
Durre gemetgian,
Ær hit to micel weorthe.
Hæfth se ælmihtiga
Eallum gesceaftum
Thæt gewrixle geset,
The nu wunian sceal;
Wyrta growan,
Leaf grenian,
Thæt on hærfest eft
Hrest and wealuwath.
Winter bringeth
Weder ungemet cald,

Swifte windas.
Sumor æfter cymeth,
Wearm gewideru.
Hwæt tha wonnan niht
Mona onlihteth,
Oththæt monaum dæg
Sunne bringeth,
Giond thas sidan geseaft.
Hæfth se ilca God
Eorthan and wætere
Mearce gesette.
Mere-stream ne dear
Ofer eorthan sceat,
Eard gebrædan
Fisca cynne,
Butan frean leafe:
Ne hio æfre ne mot
Eorthan thyrsc-wold
Up ofer steppan;
Ne tha ebban thon ma
Foldes mearce ofer.
Faran moton.
Tha gesetnessa
Sigora wealdend,
Lifes leoht fruma,
Læt thenden he wile,
Geond thas mæran gesceaft
Mearce healden.
Ac thonne se eca,
And se ælmihtiga,
Tha geweald-letheru
Wile onlætan,
Efne thara bridla,
The he gebætte
Mid his agen weorc,
Eall æt frymthe;
Thæt is witherweardnes
Wuhte gehwelcre.
The we mid thæm bwidle
Becnan tiliath;
Gif se thioden læt
Tha toslupan,
Sona hi forlætath
Lufan and sibbe,
Thæs geferscipes
Freond-rædenne:
Tilath anra gehwilc
Agnes willan.
Woruld-geseafta
Winnath betweox him,
Oththæt thios eorthe
Eall forweortheth:
And eac swa same,
Othra gesceafta
Weorthath him selfe
Siththan to nauhte.
Ac se ilca God
Se thæt eall metgath,
Se gefehth fela
Folca to somne,
And mid freondscipe
Fæste gegadrath.
Gesamnath sinscipas,
Sibbe gemengeth
Clænlice lufe.
Swa se cræftga eac,
Geferscipas
Fæste gesamnath,
Thæt hi hiora freondscipe,
Forth on symbel,
Untweofealde,
Treowa gehealdath,
Sibbe samrade,
Eala sigora God!
Wær this moncyn
Miclum gesælig,
Gif hiora mod-sefa
Meahte weorthan
Statholfæst gereaht,
Thurh tha strongan meaht
And ge endebyrd,
Swa swa othra sint
Woruld gesceafta.
Wære hit la thonne
Murge mid monnum,
Gif hit meahte swa!

One, only One, made all the heavens and earth;
Doubtless, to Him all beings owe their birth;
And, guided by His care,
Are all, who therein dwell unseen of us,
And these whom we can look at, living thus
In land and sea and air.

He is Almighty: Him all things obey,
That in such bondage know how blest are they,
Who have so good a king;
Those also serve, who thereof know not aught;
Dutiful work, however little thought,
As bondslaves they must bring.

He hath set out in kindred kindness still
Duties and laws to work his changeless will,
And, after his own mind,
That which he will'd, so long as will he would,
He will'd that everything for ever should
Thenceforward keep its kind.

Never may restless things to rest attain,
And from that settled circle turn in vain
Which order's God hath given;
He hath set fast, and check'd them each and all
By the strong measured bridle of his call
To rest, or to be driven,

As he, great Word, the leathern reins of might
Holds loose in his right hand, or draws them tight;
For he hath stretch'd along
His bridle over earth, air, sea, and beach,
That all things, leaning fastly each on each,
By double strife stand strong.

For, ever as at first the Father bade,
In the same ways of running that he made
Still changing though unchanged,
By strife most steady keeping peace most true
Our Free-Lord's handicraft, so old yet new,
Is evermore arranged.

Thus earth and seastream, fire and water thus,
And all great things about or far from us,
Betwixt themselves hold strife,
Yet so good fellowship all fastly keep,
And render bondage true, and duty deep
To him who lent their life.

Nor only thus, that, each the rest to please,
Whitherward things together dwell at ease,
But, far more strange than so,
Not one, but on its thwarter still depends
And lives on that which while it harms befriends,
Lest it too great should grow.

Wisely the mighty Framer of the world
Hath set this turn-about for ever twirl'd,
Yet ever still to stay;
The sprouting wort shoots greenly from its root,
And dying, then, in harvest yields its fruit
To live another day.

Winter brings weather cold, swift winds and snow;
Summer comes afterward with warming glow;
By night outshines the moon;
Till o'er this wide-seen world the day up-springs,
And to all men the sun returning brings
Her welcome brightness soon.

So also, God hath bounded sea and land:
The fishy kind, except at his command,
On earth may never swim:
Nor can the sea earth's threshold overleap,
Nor can the earth, beyond the tide at neap,
O'erstep the sea's wide rim.

These things the Source and Spring of life and light,
The Lord of wielded might, by his will's right,
Biddeth their bounds to keep,
Until the Everliving one makes burst
The curbing bridle set on all at first,
And so unreins the deep.

By rein and bridle in a hint I teach
The waywardness of all things each on each;
For, if the Ruler will'd
The thongs to slacken, things would soon forsake
All love and peace, and wilful evil make
Instead of good fulfill'd.

Each after its own selfish will would strive,
Till none of things on earth were left alive
In such bewrestling stern;
And in like manner other things unseen
Would be as if they never then had been,
All brought to nought in turn.

But the same God, who meteth all things thus,
Makes folk to be at peace with all and us,
In friendship true and fast:
He knits together in a love most fond
Unending wedlock, and the kindred bond
For evermore to last.

So too, the skill'd All-worker well unites
The fellowship of men in friendly rights,
That they may live at peace
In simple truthfulness and single strength
Thenceforth for ever of one mind at length
To make all evil cease.

O God All-conquering! this lower earth
Would be for men the blest abode of mirth
If they were strong in Thee,
As other things of this world well are seen;
O then, far other than they yet have been
How happy would men be!

This is a famous specimen of Alfred's moral and natural philosophy: he enlarges upon the antagonistic idea, the 'pugnantia semina' of Boethius, till he "vindicates the ways of God with man," and shows how the green world could have rolled in placid order out of the opposed forces of a chaos. It were possible, on each occasion, to multiply notes to any amount, but the reader will be better pleased if we pass on speedily.

XII. Uses of Adversity.

Qui serere ingenuum volet agrum,—Liberat arva prius fruticibus,

Se the wille wyrcan
Wæstmbære lond,
Atio of thæm æcere,
Ærest sona
Fearn and thornas,
And fyrsas swa same wiod:
Tha the willath
Wel hwær derian
Clænum hwæte:
Thy læs he citha-leas
Licge on thæm lande.
Is leoda gehwæm
Thios othru bysen
Efn behet u,
Thæt is thæt te thynceth
Thegna gehwelcum
Huniges bi-bread
Healfe thy swetre,
Gif he hwene ær
Huniges tære
Bitres onbyrgeth.
Bith eac swa same
Monna æghwilc,
Micle thy fægenra
Lithes wethres,
Gif hine lytle ær
Stormas gestondath,
And se stearca wind
Northan and eastan.
Nænegum thuhte
Dæg on thonce,
Gif sio dimme niht,

Ær ofer eldum,
Egesan ne brohte.
Swa thincth anra gehwæm,
Eorth-buendra,
Sio sothe gesælth,
Symle the betere,
And thy wynsumre,
The he wita ma,
Heardra hentha,
Her adreogeth.
Thu meaht eac mycle thy eth
On mod-sefan,
Sotha gesæltha
Sweotolor gecnawan,
And to heora cythe
Becuman siththan,
Gif thu up atyhsth,
Ærest sona,
And thu awyrtwalast.
Of gewit-locan.
Leasa gesæltha.
Swa swa londes-ceorl
Of his æcere lyeth
Yfel theod monig.
Siththan ic the secge,
Thæt thu sweotole meaht
Sotha gesæltha
Sona oncnawan:
And thu æfre ne rest
Æniges thinges,
Ofer tha ane,
Gif thu hi ealles ongitst

Whoso wills to till a field,
Well to bear a fruitful yield,
Let him first pluck up and burn
Thorns and thistles, furze and fern,
Which are wont clean wheat to hurt
Lying lifeless in the dirt.

And this other likeness too
Well behoves us all to view,
Namely, that to those who eat
Honeycomb, it seems more sweet
If a man, before the tear
Of honey, taste of bitter cheer.

So, it falls that all men are
With fine weather happier far
If a little while before
Storms were spread the welkin o'er,
And the stark wind East by North
Lately rush'd in anger forth.

None would think the daylight dear
If dim night they did not fear;
So, to every one of us,
On the broad earth dwelling thus,
Joy more joyous still is seen
After troubles once have been.

Also, thine own mind to please,
Thou shalt gain the greater ease,
And shalt go where true joys grow
If all false joys thou forego,
As ill weeds are pull'd with toil
By the landchurl from the soil.

And hereafter, thee I tell,
True joys there await thee well;
Aye and here, if these be first,
Thou for nought beside wilt thirst,
But all else shall fail to please
If thou truly knowest these.

This is a nice consolatory bit of our good king's Christian philosophy: and strangely better than the thirteen lines of Boethius, whereon the ode of Alfred is hung. In our version every word is Anglo-Saxon English; and we have been careful to preserve the pretty phrase 'huniges teare,' as closer, and more poetical too, than (as the writer at first rendered the words,)

If a man before the drop
Of honey, taste the bitter sop.

XIII. Of Inward Likings.

Quantas rerum flectat habenas——Natura potens, quibus immensum

Ic wille mid giddum
Get gecythan,
Hu se ælmihtiga
Ealra gesceafta
Bryrth mid his bridlum,
Begth thider he wile,
Mid his anwealde
Ge endebyrd,
Wundorlice
Wel gemetgath.
Hafath swa geheathorad
Heofona wealdend,
Utan befangen
Ealla gesceafta,
Geræped mid his racentan,
Thæt hi aredian ne magon
Thæt hi hi æfre him
Of aslepen:
And theah wuhta gehwilc,
Wrigath to-heald,
Sidra gesceafta.
Swithe onhelded
With thæs gecyndes,
The hi cyning engla,
Fader æt frymthe,
Fæste getiode.
Swa nu thinga gehwilc,
Thider-weard fundath,
Sidra gesceafta,
Bugon sumum englum,
And moncynne;
Thara micles to feola,,
Worold-wuniendra,
Winth with gecynde.
Theah nu on londe,
Leon gemete,
Wynsume wiht,
Wel atemede,
Hire magister
Miclum lufige,
And eac ondræde,
Dogora gehwelce;
Gif hit æfre gesælth,
Thæt hio æniges
Blodes onbyrgeth.
Ne thearf beorna nan
Wenan thære wyrde,
Thæt hio wel siththan,
Hire taman healde:
Ac ic tiohhie
Thæt hio thæs niwan taman,
Nauht ne gehicgge;
Ac thone wildan gewunan
Wille gethencan
Hire eldrena.
Onginth eorneste
Racentan slitan,
Ryn grymetigan,
And ærest ahit
Hire agenes
Huses hirde;
And hrathe siththan,
Hæletha gehwilcne,
The hio gehentan mæg.
Nele hio forlætan
Libbendes wuht.
Neata ne monna;
Nimth eall thæt hio fint.
Swa doth wudu-fuglas,
Theah hi wel sien
Tela atemede:
Gif hi on treowum weorthath
Holte to middes,
Hræthe bioth sorsewene
Heora lareowas,
The hi lange ær,
Tydon and temedon.
Hi on treowum wilde,
Eald-gecynde,
A forth siththan,
Willum wuniath;
Theah him wolde hwilc,
Heora lareowa,
Listum beodan,
Thone ilcan mete,
The he hi æror mid
Tame getede;
Him tha twigu thincath
Emne swa merge,
Thæt hi thæs metes ne recth
Thincth him to thon wynsum,
Thæt him se weald onewyth;
Thonne hi geherath
Hleothrum brægdan.
Othre fugelas;
Hi heora agne
Stefne styriath.
Stunath eal geador
Wel-winsum sanc,
Wudu eallum onewyth.
Swa bith eallum treowum,
The him on æthele bith,
Thæt hit on holte
Hyhst geweaxe.
Theah thu hwilcne boh.
Byge with eorthan,
He bith upweardes,
Swa thu an forlætest:

Widu on willan,
Went on gecynde.
Swa deth eac sio sunne,
Thonne hio on sige weortheth,
Ofer midne dæg,
Mere condel,
Scyft on ofdæle,
Uncuthne weg
Nihtes genetheth:
North eft and east
Eldum oteweth,
Breneth eorth-warum
Morgen mære torhtne.
Hio ofer moncyn stihth
A upweardes,
Oth hio eft cymeth,
Thær hire yfemest bith
Eard-gecynde.
Swa swa ælc gesceaft,
Ealle mægene,
Geond thas widan woruld,
Wrigath and higath,
Ealle mægene,
Eft symle on lyt
With his gecyndes,
Cymth to thonne hit mæg.

Nis nu ofer eorthan
Ænegu gesceaft,
The ne wilnie thæt hio,
Wolde cuman.
To tham earde,
The hio of becom,
Thæt is orsorgnes,
And ecu rest;
Thæt is openlice,
Ælmihti God.
Nis nu ofer eorthan
Ænegu gesceaft,
The ne hwearfige
Swa swa hweol deth.
On hire selfre;
Forthon hio swa hwearfath,
Thæt hio eft cume,
Thær hio æror wæs.
Thonne hio ærest sie
Utan behwerfed;
Thonne hio ealles wyrth
Utan becerred;
Hio sceol eft don
Thæt hio ær dyde,
And eac wesan,
Thæt hio æror wæs.

I will with songs make known
How the Almighty still
Bridles all things from his throne
And bends them to his will,
By His wielded might
Set wonderfully right.

The Ruler of the skies
Hath well-girt all things so,
Binding them in such strong ties,
Aside they cannot go,
And may not find the way
Whereby to slip astray.

And each living thing
On this crowded earth
Firmly to the bent doth cling
Which it had at birth
From the Father's hand
King of angel-land:

Thus each one we find
Of beings in their turn,
Save some bad angels and mankind
Thitherward doth yearn;
But those too often force
Against their nature's course.

A lioness may be such
A tame and winsome beast,
That she may love her master much
Or fear him at the least;
But if she taste of gore
She will be tame no more:

Let it not be thought
That she will then be mild,
But back to her old likings brought
Be as her elders wild,
In earnest break her chain
And rave and roar amain;

Will first her keeper bite,
And then all else beside,
Cattle or men, each living wight,
Will seize, whate'er betide,
All she can find will seize,
Her ravening to appease.

So the wood finches too
Though timely tamed they be,
If to the woods escaped anew
Again they flutter free,
However train'd and taught
Their teachers then are nought:

But wilder evermore
They will not leave the wood,
Though by their trainers, as of yore,
Enticed by tempting food;
So merry seem the trees
That meats no more may please.

All winsome then is found
The wide weald sounding strong
With other birds that sing around,
And so, these find their song,
Stunning one's ears with noise
Of their woodland joys.

Thus too, every tree,
Grown high in its own soil,
Though thou shalt bend its boughs to be
Bow'd to the earth with toil,
Let go, it upward flies
At its free will to rise.

Thus also, when the sun,
Great candle of the world,
After the mid-day down doth run
To unknown darkness hurl'd,
Again she brings to earth
Bright morn's North Eastern birth.

Upward, she ever goes,
Up, to her highest place:
So, every creature kindly grows
According to its race,
And strives with all its might
To take its nature's right.

There is not now one thing
Over this wide earth
That doth not all its longings fling
About its place of birth,
And safely there find rest
In God Almighty blest.

There is not one thing found
Over this wide world
But on itself with endless round
It, like a wheel, is twirl'd,
So turning to be seen
As it before hath been:

For, when at first it moves,
Right round it turns amain;
And, where it once has gone, behoves
To go that way again;
And, as it was before,
To be so evermore.

XIV. The Emptiness of Wealth.

Quamvis fluente dives auri gurgite——Non expleturas cogat avarus opes,

Hwæt bith thæm welegan
Woruld-gitsere,
On his mode the bet,
Theah he micel age
Goldes and gimma,
And gooda gehwæs
Æhta unrim,
And him mon erigen scyle
Æghwelce dæg,
Æcera thusend ?
Theah thes middan geard.
And this manna cyn,
Sy under sunnan,
Suth west and east,
His anwalde eall
Underthieded,
Ne mot he thara hyrsta
Hiona ne lædan,
Of thisse worulde,
Wuhte thon mare
Hord-gestreona,
Thonne he hither brohte.
Tha se Wisdom tha this lioth asungen hæfde, tha ongan he eft spellian and cwæth.

What is a man the better—
A man of worldly mould,
Though he be gainful getter
Of richest gems and gold,
With every kind well filléd
Of goods in ripe array,
And though for him be tilléd
A thousand fields a day ?

Though all this middle earth be
Beneath his wealdom thrown,
And men and all their worth be
South East and West his own,
He cannot of such treasure
Away with him take aught,
Nor gain a greater measure
Than in his mind he brought.

Wisdom having sung this lay,
Again began his spell to say,—

XV. Nero's Baseness.

Quamvis se Tyrio superbus ostro,——Comeret, et niveis lapillis.

Theah hine nu
Se yfela unrihtwisa
Neron cyninc,
Niwan gescerpte,
Wlitegum wædum,
Wundorlice
Golde gegiengde
And gim-cynnum;
Theah he wæs on werulde,
Witena gehwelcum,
On his lif-dagum,
Lath and unweorth,
Fieren-full.
Hwæt se feond swa theah,
His diorlingas

Duguthum stepte,
Ne mæg ic theah gehycgan
Hwy him on hige thorfte,
Athy sæl wesan.
Theah hi sume hwile
Gecure butan cræftum,
Cyninga dysegast,
Næron hy thy weorthran
Witena ænegum.
Theah hine se dysiga
Do to cyninge,
Hu mæg thæt gesceadwis
Scealc gereccan,
Thæt he him thy selra
Sie oththe thince?

Though Nero now himself, that evil king
Unrighteous, in his new and glittering robe
Deck'd wonderfully for apparelling
With gold and gems and many a brightsome thing,
Seem'd to be greatest of this earthly globe,
Yet to the wise man was he full of crime
Loathly and worthless in his life's daytime:
And though this fiend his darlings would reward
With gifts of rank, my mind I cannot bring
To see why he to such should grace afford:
Yet if some whiles a foolish king or lord
Will choose the simple all the wise above,
A fool himself to be by fools ador'd,
How should a wise man reckon on his love?

XVI. Of Self-rule.

Qui se volet esse potentem,——Animos domet ille feroces;

Se the wille anwald agon,
Thonne sceal he ærest tilian
Thæt he his selfes,
On sefan age,
Anwald innan:
Thy læs hi æfre sie,
His untheawum,
Eall underthyded.
Ado of his mode
Mislicra fela
Thara ymbhogona,
The him unnet sie:
Læte sume hwile
Siofunga
And ermtha thinra.
Theah him eall sie,
Thes middan geard,

Swa swa mere-streamas
Utan belicgath,
On æht gifen,
Efne swa wide,
Swa swa wesmest nu,
An iglond ligth,
Ut on garsecg,
Thær nængu bith
Niht on sumera,
Ne wuhte thon ma
On wintra daeg
Toteled tidum,
Thæt is Tile haten;
Theah nu anra hwa
Ealles wealde
Thæs iglandes,
And eac thonan

Oth Indeas
Easte-wearde;
Theah he nu thæt eall
Agan mote,
Hwy bith his anwald
Auhte thy mara,
Gif he aiththan nah
His selfes geweald
Ingethances,
And hine eorneste,
Wel ne bewarenath,
Wordum and dædum,
With tha untheawas,
The we ymb sprecath?

He that wishes power to win,
First must toil to rule his mind,
That himself the slave to sin
Selfish lust may never bind:

Let him haste to put away
All that fruitless heap of care:
Cease awhile thy sighs to day,
And thyself from sorrow spare.

Though to him this middle earth
For a garden all be given,
With the seastream round its girth,
East and west the width of heaven;

From that isle which lies outright
Furthest in the Western spray,
Where no summer sees a night,
And no winter knows a day;

Though from this, far Thule's isle,
Even to the Indian East,
One should rule the world awhile
With all might and power increas'd,

How shall he seem great or strong
If himself he cannot save
Word and deed against all wrong,
But to sin is still a slave?

XVII. True Greatness.

Omne hominum genus in terris——Simili surgit ab ortu:

Thæt eorthwaran
Ealle hæfden,
Fold-buende
Fruman gelicne;
Hi of anum twæm,
Ealle comon,
Were and wife
On worulde innan;
And hi eac nu get
Ealle gelice
On worulde cumath,
Wlance and heane.
Nis thæt nan wundor,
Forthæm witan ealle
Thæt an God is
Ealra gesceafta,

Frea moncynnes,
Fæder and scippend.
Se thære sunnan leoht
Seleth of heofonum,
Monan and thysum mærum steorrum.
Se gesceop men on eorthan,
And gesamnade
Sawle to lice.
Æt fruman ærest.
Folc under wolcnum
Emn æthele gesceop,
Ægh wilcne mon.
Hwy ge thonne æfre,
Ofer othre men,
Ofermodigen,
Buton and weorce,
Nu ge unæthelne
Ænig ne metath ?
Hwy ge eow for æthelum
Up ahebben nu ?
On thæm mode bith
Monna gehwilcum
Tha riht æthelo
The ic the recce ymb ;
Nales on thæm flæsce
Fold-buendra.
Ac nu æghwilc mon,
The mid ealle bith
His untheawum.
Underthieded ;
He forlæt ærest
Lifes frum-sceaft,
And his agene
Æthelo swa selfe ;
And eac thone fæder,
The hine æt fruman gesceop.
Forthæm hine anæthelath
Ælmihtig God,
Thæt he unæthele
A forth thanan
Wyrth on weorulde,
Towuldre ne cymth.

All men and all women on earth
Had first their beginning the same,
Into this world of their birth
All of one couple they came:

Alike are the great and the small;
No wonder that this should be thus;
For God is the Father of all,
The lord and the maker of us.

He giveth light to the sun,
To the moon and the stars as they stand;
The soul and the flesh He made one,
When first he made man in the land.

Wellborn alike are all folk
Whom He hath made under the sky;
Why then on others a yoke
Now will ye be lifting on high?

And why be so causelessly proud,
As thus ye find none are illborn?
Or why, for your rank, from the crowd
Raise yourself up in such scorn?

In the mind of a man, not his make,
In the earth-dweller's heart, not his rank,
Is the nobleness whereof I spake,
The true, and the free, and the frank.

But he that to sin was in thrall,
Illdoing wherever he can,
Hath left the first lifespring of all,
His God, and his rank as a man:

And so the Almighty down-hurl'd
The noble disgraced by his sin,
Thenceforth to be mean in the world,
And never more glory to win.

Unless one were to forage about for parallel passages, or to descant upon Alfred's good philosophy as texts; or to furnish tables of the words identical to both English and Anglo-Saxon, or to speculate upon the possibilities of metre, there really seems little reason to disturb the patient reader with many notes; let him, instead, have the satisfaction of knowing that our verse is no loose paraphrase, but a close rendering, and that several of these metres seem to be analogous with the short and tripping lines of early minstrelsy. It will be remembered that the true ballad line (as in Macaulay's Lays of Rome), though sometimes written long-wise, is in truth an eight-syllable stanza of short lines, and not a four-syllable of long ones: that great German epic, the Niebelungenlied (lately translated with uncommon ability and closeness by William Nanson Lettsom esq.) is an instance strictly in point: and further on (see Metre XXVIII) we have rendered Alfred in a similar measure.

XVIII. Of Sinful Pleasure.

Habet omnis hoc voluptas,——Stimulis agit furentes,

Eala thæt se yfla,
Unrihta gedeth,
Wratha willa
Woh-hæmetes,
Thæt he mid ealle gedræfth,
Anra gehwylces
Monna cynnes
Mod fulneah thon!
Hwæt sio wild beo,
Theah wis sie,
Anunga sceal,
Eall forweorthan,
Gif hio yrringa
Awuht stingeth.
Swa sceal sawla gehwilc
Siththan losian,
Gif se lichoma
Forlegan weortheth
Unriht-hæmede;
Bute him ær cume
Hreow to heortan,
Ær he hionan wende.

Alas that the evil unrighteous hot will
Of lawlessly wanton desire should still
Be a plague in the mind of each one!
The wild bee shall die in her stinging, tho' shrewd,
So the soul will be lost if the body be lewd,
Unless, ere it wend hence, the heart be imbued
With grief for the deed it hath done.

XIX. Where to find true joys.

Eheu, quam miseros tramite devio,——Abducit ignorantia!

Eala thæt is hefig dysig,
Hygeth ymbe se the wile,
And frecenlic,
Fira gehwilcum,
Thæt tha earman men
Mid ealle gedwæleth
Of thæm rihtan wege,
Recene alæded!
Hwæther ge willen
On wuda secan
Gold thæt reade,
On grenum triowum?
Ic wat swa theah,
Thæt hit witena nan
Thider ne seceth;
Forthæm hit thær ne wexth,
Ne on wingeardum
Wlitige gimmas.
Hwy ge nu ne settan
On sume dune
Fisc net eowru,
Thonne eow fon lysteth
Leax oththe cyperan?
Me gelicost thincth.
Thæt te ealle witen,
Eorth-buende,
Thoncol-mode
Thæt hi thær ne sint.
Hwæther ge nu willen
Wæthan mid hundum
On sealtne sæ,
Thonne eow secan lyst
Heorotas and hinda
Thu gehycgan meaht
Thæt ge willath tha
On wuda secan
Oftor micle,
Thonne ut on sæ.
Is thæt wundorlic
Thæt we witan ealle
Thæt mon secan sceal
Be sæ-warothe,
And be ea-ofrum,
Æthele gimmas,
Hwite and reade,
And hiwa gehwæs?
Hwæt hi eac witon,
Hwær hi ea-fiscas
Secan thurfan,
And swylcra fela
Weoruld-welena:
Hi thæt wel doth,
Geornfulle men,
Geara gehwilc.
Ac thæt is earmlicost
Ealra thinga,
Thæt tha dysegan sint
On gedwolan wordene,
Efne swa blinde,
Thæt hi on breostum ne magon
Eathe gecnawan,
Hwær tha ecan good,
Sotha gesæltha
Sindon gehydda:
Forthæm hi æfre ne lyst
Æfter spyrian,
Secan tha gesæltha.
Wenath samwise,
Thæt hi on this læenan mægen
Life findan
Sotha gesæltha,
Thæt is selfa God.
Ic nat hu ic mæge
Nænige thinga
Ealles swa swithe,
On sefan minum,
Hiora dysig tæelan
Swa hit me don lysteth:
Ne ic the swa sweotole
Gesecgan ne mæg.
Forthæm hig sint earmran,
And eac dysegran,
Ungesæligran,
Thonne ic the secgan mæge.
Hi wilniath
Welan and æhta,
And weorthscipes
To gewinnanne;
Thonne hi habbath thæt
Hiora hige seceth,
Wenath thonne,
Swa gewitlease,
Thæt hi tha sothan
Gesæltha hæebben.

Oh! it is a fault of weight,
Let him think it out who will,
And a danger passing great
Which can thus allure to ill
Careworn men from the right way,
Swiftly ever led astray.

Will ye seek within the wood
Red gold on the green-trees tall?
None, I wot, is wise that could,
For it grows not there at all:
Neither in winegardens green
Seek they gems of glittering sheen.

Would ye on some hill-top set,
When ye list to catch a trout
Or a carp, your fishing-net?
Men, methinks, have long found out
That it would be foolish fare,
For they know they are not there.

In the salt sea can ye find,
When ye list to start and hunt
With your hounds, the hart or hind?
It will sooner be your wont
In the woods to look, I wot,
Than in seas where they are not.

Is it wonderful to know
That for crystals red or white
One must to the sea-beach go,
Or for other colours bright,
Seeking by the river side
Or the shore at ebb of tide?

Likewise, men are well aware
Where to look for river-fish;
And all other worldly ware
Where to seek them when they wish;
Wisely careful men will know
Year by year to find them so.

But of all things 'tis most sad
That they foolish are so blind,
So besotted and so mad
That they cannot surely find
Where the ever-good is nigh
And true pleasures hidden lie.

Therefore, never is their strife
After those true joys to spur;
In this lean and little life
They half witted deeply err,
Seeking here their bliss to gain,
That is, God Himself, in vain.

Ah! I know not in my thought
How enough to blame their sin,
Nor so clearly as I ought
Can I show their fault within;
For, more bad and vain are they
And more sad than I can say.

All their hope is to acquire
Worship, goods, and worldly weal;
When they have their mind's desire,
Then such witless Joy they feel,
That in folly they believe
Those True joys they then receive.

Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs, of thistles?" Alfred is of the Wise Teacher's school: and bids us seek the chief good beyond this evil world.

XX. Of God and His Creatures.

O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas,—Terrarum cœlique sator, qui tempus ab ævo

Eala min Drihten!
Thæt thu eart ælmihtig,
Micel modilic,
Mærthum gefraege,
And wundorlic,
Witena gehwylcum!

Hwæt thu ece God!
Ealra gesceafta
Wundorlice
Wel gesceope,
Ungesewenlicra,
And eac swa same,
Gesewenlicra;
Softe wealdest
Scirra gesceafta,
Mid gesceadwisum
Mægne and cræfte.
Thu thysne middan geard
From fruman ærest,
Forth oth ende,
Tidum todældes,
Swa hit getæsost wæs
Endebyrdes:
Thæt hi æghwæther
Ge arfarath
Ge eftcumath.
Thu the unstilla
Agna gesceafta
To thinum willan
Wislice astyrest,
And the self wunæst
Swithe stille,
Unanwendendlic,
A forth simle!
Nis nan mihtigra,
Ne nan mærra,
Ne geond ealle tha gesceaft,
Efnlica thin.
Ne the ænig ned-thearf naes
Æfre giet ealra
Thara weorca,
The thu geworht hafast;
Ac mid thinum willan
Thu hit worhtes eall.
And mid anwalde
Thinum agenum,
Weorulde geworhtest,
And wuhta gehwæt;
Theah the nænegu
Ned-thearf wære eallra
Thara mærtha!
Is thaet micel gecynd
Thines goodes;
Thencth ymb se the wile:
Forthon hit is eall an
Ælces thinges,
Thu and thæt thin good;
Hit is thin agen,
Forthæm hit nis utan,
Ne com auht to the.
Ac ic georne wat,
Thæt thin goodnes is
Ælmihtig good,
Eall mid the selfum.
Hit is ungelic
Urum gecynde:
Us is utan cymen
Eall the we habbath
Gooda on grundum,
From Gode selfum.
Næft thu to ænegum
Andan genumenne,
Forthæm the nan thing nis
Thin gelica;
Ne huru ænig
Ælcræftigre;
Forthæm thu eal good,
Anes getheahte,
Thines gethohtest,
And hi tha worhtest.
Næs æror the
Ænegu gesceaft,
The auht oththe nauht
Auther worhte.
Ac thu butan byne,
Brego moncynnes,
Æl ælmihtig God,
Eall geworhtest
Thing-thearle good;
Eart the selfa
Thæt behste good!
Hwæt thu hallg fæder,
Æfter thinum willan,
Worulde gesceope,
Thisne middan geard,
Meahtum thinum.
Weorada Drihten,
Swa thu woldest self:
And mid thinum willan
Wealdest ealles!
Forthæm thu sotha God,
Selfa dælest
Gooda æghwilc;
Forthæm thu geara ær,
Ealle gesceafta
Ærest gesceope,
Swithe gelice,
Sumes hwæthre theah
Ungelice;
Nemdest eall swa theah
Mid ane noman,
Ealle togædere,
Woruld under wolcnum.
Hwæt thu wuldres God!
Thone anne naman
Eft todældes,
Fæder, on feower:
Wæs thara folde an,
And water other,
Worulde dæles,
And fyr is thridde,
And feowerthe lyft;
Thæt is eall weoruld
Eft togædere.
Habbath theah tha feower
Frum-stol hiora;
Æhgwilc hiora
Agenne stede:
Theah anra hwilc
With other sie
Miclum gemenged;
And mid mægne eac
Fæder ælmihtiges
Fæste gebunden,
Geslblice,
Softe togædere,
Mid bebode thine,
Bilewit fæder!
Thæt te heora ænig
Othres ne dorste
Mearc ofergangan,
For metodes ege;
Ac gethweorod sint
Thegnas togædere,
Cyninges cempan.
Cele with hæto,
Wæt with drygum,
Winnath hwæthre.
Wæter and eorthe
Wæstmas brengath;
Tha sint on gecynde
Cealda ba twa.
Wæter wæt and ceald,
Wangas ymbe-licgath.
Eorthe æl greno
Eac hwæthre ceald lyft
Is gemenged,
Forthæm hio on middum wunath
Nis thaet nan wundor
Thaet hio sie wearm and ceald
Wæt wolcnes tier
Winde geblonden;
Forthæm hio is on midle,
Mine gefræge,
Fyres and eorthan.
Fela monna wat
Thæt te yfemest is
Ealra gesceafta
Fyr ofer eorthan,
Folde neothemest.
Is thaet wundorlic,
Weroda Drihten!
Thæt thu mid getheahte
Thinum wyrcest;
Thaet thu thaem gesceaftum
Swa gesceadlice
Mearce gesettest,
And hi ne mengdest eac.
Hwæt thu thaem wættere
Wætum and cealdum,
Foldan to flore
Fæste gesettest;
Forthæm hit unstille,
Æghwider wolde
Wide toscrithan,
Wæc and hnesce;

Ne meahte hit on him selfum.
Soth ic geare wat
Æfre gestandan:
Ac hit sio eorthe
Hilt and swelgeth eac.
Be sumum dæle,
Thæt hio siththan mæg,
For thæm sype weorthan
Geleht lyftum.
Forthæm leaf and gærs,
Bræd geond Bretene,
Bloweth and groweth,
Eldum to are.
Eorthe sio cealde
Brength waestma fela,
Wundorlicra,
Forthæm hio mid thæm wætere
Weorthath gethawened.
Gif thæt nære,
Thonne hio wære
Fordrugod to duste,
And todrifen siththan
Wide mid winde;
Swa nu weorthath oft
Axe giond eorthan
Eall toblawen.
Ne meahte on thære eorthan
Awuht libban,
Ne wuhte thon ma
Wætres brucan,
Oneardian
Ænige cræfte,
For cele anum:
Gif thu, cyning engla,
With fyre hwæt-hwugu,
Foldan and lagu-sream
Ne mengdest togædere;
And gemetgodest
Cele and hæto
Cræfte thine,
Thæt thæt fyr ne mæg
Foldan and mere-stream
Blate forbærnan,
Theah hit with ba twa sie
Fæste gefeged;
Fæder eald geweorc.
Ne thincth me thæt wundur
Wuhte the læsse,
Thæt thios eorthe mæg,
And egor-stream,
Swa ceald gesceaft,
Cræfta nane,
Ealles adwæscan
Thæt thæt him on innan sticath
Fyres, gefeged
Mid frean cræfte.
Thæt is agen cræft
Eagor-streames,
Wætres and eorthan,
And on wolcnum eac,
And efne swa same
Uppe ofer rodere.
Thonne is thær fyres
Frum-stol on riht
Eard ofer eallum
Othrum gesceaftum
Gesewenlicum,
Geond thisne sidan grund;
Theah hit with ealle sie
Eft gemenged
Weoruld-gesceafta:
Theah waldan ne mot,
Thæt hit ænige
Eallunga fordo
Buton thæs leafe,
The us this lif tiode:
Thæt is se eca,
And se ælmihtiga.
Eorthe is heflgre
Othrum gesceaftum,
Thicre gethruen;
Forthæm hio thrage stod
Ealra gesceafta
Under nithemæst,
Buton thæm rodere,
The thas ruman gesceaft
Ægbwylce dæge,
Utan ymbwyrfeth,
And theah thære eorthan
Æfre ne othrineth;
Ne hire on nanre ne mot
Near thonne on othre
Stowe gestæppan.
Striceth ymbutan
Ufane and neothane,
Efen neah gebwæther.
Æghwilc gesceaft,
The we ymb sprecath,
Hæfth his agenne
Eard on sundran,
Bith theah with thæm othrum
Eac gemenged.
Ne mæg hira ænig
Butan othrum bion.
Theah hi unaweotole
Somod eardien;
Swa nu eorthe and wæter
Earfod tæcne,
Unwisra gehwæm,
Wuniath on fyre;
Theah hi sint an
Sweotole thæm wisum.
Is thæt fyr swa same
Fæst on thæm wætre,
And on stanum eac
Stille geheded:
Earfoth hawe is.
Hwæthre thær hafath
Fæder engla
Fyr gebunden
Efne to thon fæste,
Thæt hit fiolan ne mæg
Eft aet his ethle,
Thær thæt other fyr
Up ofer eall this
Eard faest wunath.
Sona hit forlseteth
Thas læenan gesceaft,
Mid cele ofercumen,
Gif hit on cyththe gewit;
And theah wuhta gehwilc
Wilnath thider-weard,
Thær his mægthe bith
Mæst aetgædre.
Thu gestatholadest,
Thurh tha strongan meaht,
Weroda wuldor cyning!
Wundorlice,
Eorthan swa fæste,
Thæt hio on ænige
Healfe ne heldeth,
Ne mæg hio hider ne thider
Sigan the swithor
The hio symle dyde.
Hwæt hi theah eorthlices
Auht ne heldeth,
Is theah efn ethe
Up and of dune,
To feallanne
Foldan thisse;
Thæm anlicost,
The on æge bith
Gioleca on middan,
Glideth hwæthre
Æg ymbutan.
Swa stent eall weoruld
Stille on tille,
Streamas ymbutan,
Lagu-floda gelac.
Lyfte and tungla,
And sio scire scell,
Scritheth ymbutan,
Dogora gehwilc,
Dyde lange swa.
Hwæt thu thioda God,
Thriefalde on us
Sawle gesettest,
And hi siththan eac
Styrest and tihtest,
Thurh tha strongan meaht;
Thæt hire thy læsse
On thæm lytlan ne bith
Anum fingre,
The hire on eallum bith
Thæm licboman,
Forthæm ic lytle ær,
Sweotole sæde,
Thæt sio sawl wære

Thriefald gesceaft,
Thegna gehwilces:
Forthæm uthwitan
Ealle seggath,
Thæt te an gecynd
Ælcre saule
Yrsung wære,
Other wilnung;
Is sio thridde gecynd
Thæm twæm betere,
Sio gesceadwisnes.
Nis thæt scandlic craeft,
Forthæm hit naenig hafath,
Neat buton monnum.
Hæfth tha othra twa
Unrim wuhta.
Hæfth tha wilnunga
Wel hwilc neten,
And tha yrsunga
Eac swa selfe.
Forthy men habbæth
Geond middan geard,
Eorth-gesceafta
Ealle oferthungen;
Forthæm the hi habbath
Thæs the hi nabbath,
Thone ænne craeft
The we ær nemdon.
Sio gesceadwisnes
Sceal on gehwelcum
Thære wilnunge
Waldan semle,
And irsunge
Eac swa selfe.
Hio sceal mid getheahte,
Thegnes mode,
Mid andgite
Ealles waldan.
Hio is thæt mæste mægen
Monnes saule,
And se selesta
Sundor craefta.
Hwæt thu tha saule,
Sigora waldend,
Theoda thrym-cyning,
Thus gesceope,
Thæt hio hwearfode
On hire selfre,
Hire utan ymb,
Swa swa eal deth
Rine swifte rodor:
Recene ymbscritheth
Dogora gehwilce,
Drihtnes meahtum
Thisne middan geard:
Swa deth monnes saul,
Hweole gelicost,
Hwærfeth ymbe hy selfe,
Oft smeagende
Ymb thas eorthlican
Drihtnes gesceafta,
Dagum and nihtum.
Hwilum hi selfe
Secende smeath
Hwilum eft smeath
Ymb thone ecan God,
Sceppend hire;
Scrithende færth
Hweole gelicost,
Hwærfth ymb hi selfe.
Thonne hio ymb hire scyppend
Mid gescead smeath,
Hio bith upahæfen
Ofer hi selfe;
Ac hio bith eallunga
An hire selfre
Thonne hio ymb hi selfe
Secende smeath.
Hio bith swithe flor
Hire selfre beneothan,
Thonne hio thæs lænan
Lufath and wundrath
Eorthlicu thing,
Ofer ecne ræd.
Hwæt thu ece God,
Eard forgeafe
Saulum on heofonum;
Selest weorthlica
Ginfæsta gifa,
Godælmihtig!
Be ge earnunga
Anra gehwelcre.
Ealle hi scinath
Thurh tha sciran neaht
Hadre on heofenum;
Na hwæthre theah
Ealle efenbeorhte.
Hwæt we oft gesioth
Hadrum nihtum,
Thæt te heofon-steorran
Ealle efenbeorhte,
Æfre ne scinath.
Hwæt thu ece God,
Eac gemengest
Tha heofoncundan
Hither with eorthan;
Saula with lice
Siththan wuniath:
This eorthlice
And thæt ece samod,
Saul in flæsce.
Hwæt hi simle to the
Hiona fundiath.
Forthæm hi hider of the
Æror comon;
Sculon eft to the.
Sceal se lichama
Last weardigan
Eft on eorthan,
Forthæm he ær of hire
Weox on weorulde.
Wunedon æt somne
Efen swa lange
Swa him lyfed wæs
From thæm ælmihtigan,
The hi æror gio
Gesomnade.
Thæt is soth cyning,
Se thas foldan gesceop,
And hi gifylde tha
Swithe mislicum
Mine gefræge,
Neata cynnum,
Nergend user.
He hi siththan aslow
Sæda monegum
Wuda and wyrta,
Weorulde sceatum.
Forgif nu ece God,
Urum modum,
Thæt hi moten to the,
Metod alwuhta,
Thurh thas earfothu
Up astigan:
And of thisum bysegum,
Bilewit fæder,
Theoda waldend,
To the cuman;
And thonne mid openum
Eagum moten
Modes ures,
Thurh thinra mægna sped,
Ælwelm gesion
Ealira gooda;
Thæt thu eart selfa,
Sige Drihten God!
Ge tha eagan hal
Ures modes,
Thæt we hi on the selfum
Siththan moten
Afæstnian,
Fæder engla!
Todrif thone thiccan mist,
The thrage nu
With tha eagan foran
Usses modes
Hangode hwyle,
Hefig and thystre.
Onliht nu tha eagan
Usses modes
Mid thinum leohte,
Lifes waldend;
Forthæm thu eart sio birhtu,
Bilewit fæder,
Sothes leohtes:
And thu selfa eart
Sio fæste ræst,
Fæder ælmihtig!

Ealra sothfæstra,
Hwæt thu softe gedest,
Thæt hi the selfne
Gesion moten.
Thu eart ealra thinga,
Theoda waldend!
Fruma and ende.
Hwæt thu, fæder engla,
Eall thing birest
Ethelice,
Buton geswince.
Thu eart selfa weg,
And latteow eac,
Lifgendra gehwæs;
And sio wlitige stow
The se weg to ligth.
The ealle to
A fundiath,
Men of moldan
On tha mæran geceaft!

O thou, my Lord Almighty, great and wise,
Wellseen for mighty works, and marvellous
To every mind that knows thee, Ever Good!
Wondrously well all creatures Thou hast made,
Unseen of us or seen; with softest band
Of skilful strength thy brighter beings leading,
Thou from its birth forth onward to its end
This middle earth by times hast measured out
As was most fit; that orderly they go
And eftsoon come again. Thou wisely stirrest
To thine own will thy changing unstill creatures,
Unchangeable and still thyself for ever!
No one is mightier, greater than Thou art,
No one was made thine equal: need was none,
Of all these works which thou hast wrought, to Thee;
But, at the willing of thy power, the world
And everything within it didst thou make,
Without all need to Thee of such great works,
Great is thy goodness,—think it out who will;
For it is all of one, in everything,
Thou and Thy good; thine own; not from without,
Neither did any goodness come to Thee:
But, well I know, thy goodness is Most Good
All with thyself: unlike to us in kind;
To us, from outwardly, from God himself,
Came all we have of good in this low earth.
Thou canst not envy any; since to Thee
Nothing is like, nor any higher skilled;
For thou, All good, of thine own thought didst think,
And then that thought didst work. Before Thee none
Was born, to make or unmake anything,
But Thou without a model madest all,
Lord God of men, Almighty, very good,

Being thyself of all the Highest good!
Thou, Holy Father, thou, the Lord of hosts,
After thy will, and by thy power alone,
The world, this midway garden, didst create;
And by thy will, as now thy wisdom would,
Wieldest it all! For thou, O God of truth,
Long time of old didst deal out all good things,
Making thy creatures mainly well alike,
Yet not alike in all ways; and didst name
With one name all together all things here,
"The World under the clouds." Yet, God of glory,
That one name, Father, thou didst turn to four:
The first, this Earth-field; and the second, water;
Shares of the world: third, fire, and fourth, air:
This is again the whole world all together.
Yet have these four each one his stead and stool,
Each hath its place; tho' much with other mixt;
Fast by thy might, Almighty Father, bound,
Biding at peace, and softly well together
By thy behest, kind Father! so that none
Durst overstep its mark, for fear of Thee,
But willing thanes and warriors of their King
Live well together, howsoever strive
The wet with dry, the chilly with the hot.
Water and Earth, both cold in kind, breed fruits:
Water lies wet and cold around the field.
With the green earth is mingled the cold air,
Dwelling in middle place: it is no wonder
That it be warm and cold, blent by the winds,
This wide wet tier of clouds; for, in my judgment,
Air hath a midway place, 'twixt earth and fire:
All know that fire is uppermost of all
Over this earth, and ground is nethermost.
Yet is this wonderful, O Lord of Hosts,
Which by thy thought thou workest, that distinctly
Thou to thy creatures settest mark and bound
And dost not mingle them: the wet cold water
Thou fixest it the fast earth for a floor,
For that itself, unstill and weak and soft
Alone would widely wander everywhere,

Nor (well I wot it sooth) could ever stand.
But the earth holds, and swills it in some sort,
That through such sipping it may afterward
Moisten the aery-lift: then leaves and grass
Yond o'er the breadth of Britain blow and grow,
Its praise of old. The cold earth bringeth fruits
More marvellously forth, when it is thawed
And wetted by the water: if not so,
Then were it dried to dust, and driven away
Wide by the winds; as often ashes now
Over the earth are blown: nor might on earth
Aught live, nor any wight by any craft
Brook the cold water, neither dwell therein,
If thou, O King of Angels, otherwhile
Mingledst not soil and stream with fire together;
And didst not craftwise mete out cold and heat
So that the fire may never fiercely burn
Earth and the sea stream, though fast linked with both,
The Father's work of old. Nor is methinks
This wonder aught the less, that earth and sea,
Cold creatures both, can by no skill put out
The fire that in them sticks, fixt by the Lord.
Such is the proper use of the salt seas
Of earth and water and the welkin eke,
And even of the upper skies above.
There, is of right the primal place of fire;
Its birth-right over all things else we see
Throughout the varied deep, tho' mixt with all
Things of this world, it cannot over one
Rise to such height as to destroy it quite,
But by His leave who shaped out life to us,
The Everliving and Almighty One.

Earth is more heavy and more thickly pack'd
Than other things; for that it long hath stood
Of all the nethermost: saving the sky
Which daily wafteth round this roomy world,
Yet never whirleth it away, nor can
Get nearer anywhere than everywhere,
Striking it round-about, above, below,

With even nearness wheresoe'er it be.
Each creature that we speak of hath his place
Own and asunder, yet is mixt with all.
No one of them may be without the rest,
Though dwelling all together mixedly:
As now the earth and water dwell in fire,
A thing to the unlearned hard to teach,
But to the wise right clear: and in same sort
Fire is fast fixt in water, and in stones
Still hidden away and fixt, tho' hard to find.
Yet thitherward the Father of angels hath
So fastly bound up fire, that it may
Never again get back to its own home
Where over all this earth sure dwells the fire.
Soon would it leave this lean world, overcome
Of cold, if to its kith on high it went;
Yet everything is yearning thitherward
Where its own kindred bide the most together.

Thou hast established, thro' thy strong might,
O glorious king of hosts, right wondrously
The earth so fast, that it on either half
Heeleth not over, nor can stronger lean
Hither or thither, than it ever did.
Since nothing earthly holds it, to this globe
'Twere easy up or down to fall aside,
Likest to this, that in an egg the yolk
Bides in the middle, tho' the egg glides round.
So all the world still standeth on its stead
Among the streams, the meeting of the floods:
The lift and stars and the clear shell of heaven
Sail daily round it, as they long have done.

Moreover, God of people, thou hast set
A threefold soul in us, and afterward
Stirrest and quick'nest it with thy strong might
So that there bideth not the less thereof
In a little finger than in all the body.
Therefore a little before I clearly said
That the soul is a threefold workmanship

In every man: because the wise all say
That ire is one whole part in every soul,
Another, lust; another and the third
Far better than these twain, wise-mindedness:
This is no sorry craft; for only man
Hath this, and not the cattle: the other two
Things out of number have as well as we;
For ire and lust each beast hath of itself.
Therefore have men, thro'out this middle sphere
Surpassed Earth's creatures all; for that they have
What these have not, the one good craft we named.
Wisemindedness in each should govern lust
And ire, and its own self; in every man
With thought and understanding ruling him.
This is the mightiest mainstay of man's soul,
The one best mark to sunder it from beasts.

Thou mighty king of peoples, glorious Lord,
Didst fashion thus the soul, that it should turn
Itself around itself, as in swift race
Doth all the firmament, which quickly twirls
Every day around this middle sphere,
By the Lord's might: so doth the soul of man
Likest a wheel whirl round about itself,
Oft-times keen searching out by day and night
About these earthly creatures of the Lord:
Somewhile herself she probes with prying eye:
Somewhile again she asks about her God
The Ever One, her Maker; going round
Likest a wheel, whirling around herself.
When she about her Maker heedful asks,
She is upheaved above her lower self:
She altogether in herself abides
When, seeking round, she pries about herself:
But furthest falls beneath herself, when she
With love and wonder searcheth out this earth,
With its lean lusts, above the lore for ever!

Yea, more; Thou, Evergood! to souls in heaven
Givest an heritage, Almighty God,

And worthiest lasting gifts, as each hath earned.
They thro' the moonlit night shine calm in heaven;
Yet are not all of even brightness there,
So oft we see the stars of heaven by night
They shine not ever all of even brightness.

Moreover, Ever-Good! thou minglest here
Heavenly things with Earthly, soul with flesh:
Afterwards soul and flesh both live together
Earthly with heavenly: ever hence they strive
Upward to thee, because they came from thee,
And yet again they all shall go to thee!
This living body yet once more on earth
Shall keep its ward, for-that it theretofore
Wax'd in the world: they dwelt (this body and soul)
So long together as to them gave leave
The Almighty, who had made them one before;
That is in sooth the King! who made this world
And fill'd it mixedly with kinds of cattle,
Our saviour and near helper, as I trow.
Thence he with many seeds of woods and worts
Stock'd it in all the corners of the world.
Forgive now, Ever Good! and give to us
That in our minds we may upsoar to thee,
Maker of all things, thro' these troublous ways;
And from amidst these busy things of life,
O tender Father, Wielder of the world,
Come unto Thee, and then thro' thy good speed
With the mind's eyes well opened well may see
The welling spring of Good, that Good, Thyself,
O Lord, the God of Glory!—Then make whole
The eyes of our understandings, so that we,
Father of angels, fasten them on Thee!
Drive away this thick mist, which long while now
Hath hung before our mind's eyes, heavy and dark.
Enlighten now these mind's eyes with thy light,
Master of life; for thou, O tender Father,
Art very brightness of true light thyself;
Thyself Almighty Father, the sure rest
Of all thy fast and true ones; winningly

Thou orderest it that they may see Thyself.
Thou art of all things origin and end,
O Lord of all men; Father of angels, thou
Easily bearest all things without toil,
Thou art thyself the way and leader too,
Of every one that lives, and the pure place
That the way leads to: all men from this soil
Throughout the breadth of being, yearn to Thee.

Alfred here expands twenty-eight lines of Boethius into a magnificent psalm, worthy of the Christian poet and philosopher. In all this, how strangely in advance, not only of his own age, but positively of ours! Religion and learning, poetical expression, and pure moral feeling,—every excellence is here:—we will not attempt.

To gild refined gold, to paint the lily,
Or add a perfume to the violet.

Let Alfred, through our earnestly attempted faithfulness, speak for himself. The translation is literal,

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XXI. Of inward light.

Huc omnes pariter venite capti,——Quos fallax ligat improbis catenis

Wel la monna bearn,
Geond middan geard!
Friora æghwilc
Fundie to thæm
Ecum gode,
The we ymb sprecath;
And to thæm gesælthum,
The we secgath ymb.
Se the thonne nu sie
Nearwe gehefted
Mid thisses mæran
Middan geardes
Unnyttre lufe,
Sece him eft hræthe
Fulne friodom,
Thæt he forth cume
To thæm gesælthum,
Saula rædes.
Forthæm thæt is sio ana rest
Ealira geswinca,

Hyhtlicu hyth
Heaum ceolum
Modes usses;
Mere smylta wic;
Thæt is sio ana hyth
The æfre bith,
Æfter tham ythum
Ura geswinca,
Ysta gehwelcre,
Ealnig smylte.
Thæt is sio frith-stow,
And sio frofor ana
Ealira yrminga,
Æfter thissum
Weoruld-geswincum.
Thæt is wynsum stow,
Æfter thissum yrmthum,
To aganne.
Ac ic georne wat,
Thæt te gylden mathm,

Sylofren sinc,
Stan-searo gimma nan,
Middengeardes wela,
Modes eagan
Æfre ne onlyhtath,
Auht ne gebetath
Hiora scearpnesse,
To thære sceawunga
Sothra gesæltha.
Ac hi swithor get,
Monna gehwelces
Modes eagan,
Ablendath on breostum,
Thonne hi hi beorhtran gedon.
Forthæm æghwilc thing
The on this andweardan
Life licath,
Lænu sindon
Eorthlicu thing,
A fleondu.
Ac thæt is wundorlic
Wlite and beorhtnes,
The wuhta gehwæs
Wlite geberhteth,
And æfter thæm,
Eallum waldeth.
Nele se waldend
Thæt forweorthan scylen
Saula usse;
Ac he hi selfa wile
Leoman onlihtan,
Lifes waldend!
Gif thonne hæretha hwilc,
Hlutrum eagum
Modes sines mæg
Æfre ofsion
Hiofones leohtes
Hlutre beolhto,
Thonne wile he secgan,
Thæt thære sunnan sie
Beorhtnes thiostro,
Beorna gehwylcum,
To metanne
With thæt micle leoht
Godes ælmihtiges,
Thæt is gasta gehwæm,
Ece butan ende,
Eadegum saulum!

Well,—O ye children of men in mid earth!
Every freeman should seek till he find
That, which I spake of, good endless in worth;
These, which I sing of, the joys of the mind.

Let him who is narrow'd and prison'd away
By love of this middle earth empty and vain,
Seek out for himself full freedom today,
That soul feeding joys he may quickly attain.

For, such of all toil is the only one goal,
For sea-weary keels hythe-haven from woes,
The great quiet dwelling that harbours the soul
Still calm in the storm, and from strife a repose.

That is the peace-place, and comfort alone
Of all that are harm'd by the troubles of life,
A place very pleasant and winsome to own
After this turmoil of sorrow and strife.

But right well I wot that no treasnre of gold
Nor borders of gemstone, nor silvery store,
Nor all of earth's wealth the mind's sight can unfold
Or better its sharpness true joys to explore:

But rather, make blind in the breast of each man
The eyes of his mind than make ever more bright,
For, sorry and fleeting as fast as they can
Are all who in this flitting earth can delight.

Yet wondrous the beauty and brightness is seen
Of that which hath brighten'd and beautified all
So long as on this middle earth they have been,
And afterward happily holds them in thrall.

For the Ruler he wills not that soul should be nought,
Himself will enlighten it Lord of life given!
If any man then with the eyes of his thought
May see the clear brightness of light from high heaven,

Then will he say that the blaze of the sun
Is darkness itself to the glory so bright
Which Great God Almighty shines out on each one
Of souls of the happy for ever in light.

Scarcely a single word of Alfred is to be found in Boethius: and the ode is in fact an independent poem. It is charming to take note how constantly our Christian King is looking forward to his heavenly inheritance. To the writer it has been true and deep delight thus to fill the mind with the pure philosophy of Alfred, and then to let his homilies flow out into these new shapes: as it were, gold, melted anew in an earthen crucible, and poured out into the popular moulds of modern metres. May this work be in its measure for good! Alfred, in his free paraphrase of the more Horatian Boethius, and in the very few other fragments that remain to us of that first rate Head and Heart, is so full of Christian wisdom, moral beauty, excellent learning, piety, and power, that some small service cannot but be done to Good and Truth, by the publication of these Metres.

XXII. Of the inner mind, and the outer sin.

Quisquis profunda mente vestigat verum, —Cupitque nullis ille devils falli.

Se the æfter rihte
Mid gerece,
Wille inweardlice
Æfter spyrian,

Swa deoplice,
Thæt hit todrifan ne mæg
Monna ænig;
Ne amerran huru

Ænig eorthlic thinog;
He ærest sceal
Secan on him selfum,
Thæt he sume hwile
Ymbutan hine
Æror sohte;
Seoe thæt siththan
On his sefan innan;
And forlæte an,
Swa he oftost mæge,
Ælcne ymbhogan
Thy him unnet sie;
And gesamnige,
Swa he swithost mæge,
Ealle to thæm anum,
His ingethonc.
Geseege his mod,
Thæt hit mæg findan,
Eall on him innan,
Thæt hit oftost nu,
Ymbutan hit
Ealneg seceth,
Gooda æghwylc.
He ongit siththan
Yfel and unnet,
Eal thæt he hæfde
On his incofan,
Æror lange;
Efne swa sweotole,
Swa he on tha sunnan mæg
Eagum andweardum
Onlocian.
And hi eac ongit
His ingethonc
Leohtre and berhtre,
Thonne se leoma sie
Sunnan on sumera,
Thonne swegles gim,
Hador heofon-tungol,
Hlutrost scineth.
Forthæm thæs lichoman
Leahtras and hefignes
And tha untheawas,
Eallunga ne magon
Of mode ation
Monna ænegum,
Rihtwisnesse.
Theah nu rinca hwæm,
Thæs lichoman,
Leahtras and hefignes
And untheawas
Oft bysigen
Monna mod-sefan,
Mæst and swithost
Mid thære yflan
Oforgiotolnesse;
Mid gedwol-miste
Dreorigne sefan
Fortith mod foran
Monna gehwelces,
Thæt hit swa beohte ne mot
Blican and scinan,
Swa hit wolde gif
Hit geweald ahte.
Theah hith sum corn
Sædes gehealden
Symle on thære saule
Sothfæstnesse,
Thenden gadertang wunath
Gast on lice.
Thæs sædes corn
Bith simle aweaht
Mid æcunga,
Eac siththan,
Mid goodre lare,
Gif hit growan sceal.
Hu mæg ænig man
Andsware findan
Thinga æniges,
Thegen mid geceade,
Theah hine rinca hwilc
Rihtwislice
Æfter frigne,
Gif he awuht nafath
On his mod-sefan,
Mycles ne lytles
Rihtwisnesses,
Ne geradscipes?
Nis theah ænig man
Thæt te ealles swa
Thæs geradscipes
Swa bereafod sie,
Thæt he andsware
Ænige ne cunne
Findan on ferhthe,
Gif he frugnen hith.
Forthæm hit is riht spell,
Thæt us reahte gio,
Eald uthwita
Ure Platon;
He cwæth thæt te æghwilc
Ungemyndig
Rihtwisnesse,
Hine hræthe sceolde
Eft gewendan
Into sinum
Modes gemynde:
He mæg siththan.
On his run-cofan
Rihtwisnesse
Findan on ferhte,
Fæste gehydde
Mid gedræfnesse
Dogora gehwilce,
Modes sines,
Mæst and swithost;
And mid hefinesse
His lichoman;
And mid thæm bisgum,
The on breostum styreth
Mon on mode
Mæla gehwylce.

The man that after right with care
Will inwardly and deeply dive,
So that none earthly thing may scare
Nor him from such good seeking drive,

First in himself he shall find out
That which beyond he somewhile sought,
Within his mind must search about
And leave behind each troublous thought;

This at the soonest, as he may,
Such care were harm to him and sin;
Then let him haste and hide away
To this alone, his Mind within.

Say to this mind, that it may find
What oftest now it seeks around,
All in, and to, itself assign'd
Every good that can be found;

He then will see that all he had
In his mind's chamber thought and done,
Was evil long afore and bad,
Clearly as he can see the sun:

But his own mind he shall see there
Lighter and brighter than the ray
Of heaven's star, the gem of air,
The sun in clearest summer day.

For that the body's lusts and crimes
And all its heaviness in kind
Utterly may not any times
Wipe out right wisdom from man's mind:

Though now in every man such wrong,
Those lusts and crimes and fleshly weight,
Worry the mind both loud and strong
And make it half forget its state.

And though the mist of lies may shade
Man's dreary thought that it be dull
And be no more so bright array'd
An if 'twere pure and powerful,

Yet always is some seed-corn held
Of sturdy truth within the soul,
While flesh and ghost together weld,
And make one fixt and gather'd whole.

This seed-corn waxes evermore,
By much asking quickened so,
As well as by good wholesome lore,
That it quickly learns to grow.

How may a man right answer find
To anything ask'd well and fit,
Unless he keenly store his mind
That it have much or little wit?

Yet is there no man so bereaved
Of knowledge, that he cannot bring
Some answer well to be received
If he be ask'd of anything.

Wherefore it is a spell of right
Which our own Plato, long of old,
That ancient wise and worthy wight,
To all of us most truly told;

He said, that each who wisdom sought,
Forgetful, should to Memory turn,
And in the coffer of his thought
Right-wisdom hidden would discern,

Through all the drift of trouble there,
And all this body's heavy clay,
And busy toil, and daily care
Which stir the breasts of men alway.

Alfred here, more in the wake of Boethius, becomes a Platonist, rather than a Christian. It is an old Antinomian contrivance to separate the soul from the deeds done in the body: but it will not do: body and soul are mated so together that each is responsible for the other. However, there are some great truths here hinted at: "hæret profecto semen introrsum veri," conscience is never quite extinguished; there are ruins of good even in the basest.

The writer considers it almost an unfair advantage thus to annotate his own work, and therefore he often abstains from much that might be added in illustration: but, almost in self defence, he requests the reader not to imagine that Alfred is misinterpreted or added to, even in such an expression as "the coffer of his thought,"—the original is run-cofan—thus also, "Right-wisdom" is rihtwisnesse: and so, with many other like words.

XXIII. True Happiness.

Felix qui potuit boni——Fontem visere lucidum:

Sie thæt la on eorthan
Ælces thinges
Gesælig mon,
Gif he gesion mæge
Thone hlutrestan
Heofon-torhtan stream,
Ælhelne æwelm
Ælces goodes!
And of him selfum
Thone sweartan mist,
Modes thiostro
Mæg sweorpan!
We sculon theah gita,
Mid Godes fylste,
Ealdum and leasum
Thinne ingethonc
Betan bispellum;
Thæt thu the bet mæge
Aredian to rodorum
Rihte stige;
On thone ecan eard
Usse saule.

Look! for on earth a happy man
In everything is he,
Who Heaven's shining river can
Good's highborn well-spring see;
And of himself may scatter back
His mind's own mist of swarthy black.

By God's good help, we will as yet
With spells of olden leaven
Inform thy mind that thou mayest get
To read the way to heaven;
The right way to that happy shore
Our soul's own country evermore.

This is but a very small portion of the ode of Boethius, which details the story of Orpheus and Eurydice; Alfred has translated it, and probably into metre: but it is not given, as such, in Fox's Boethius. We may here mention, that Alfred has omitted to metricize several little bits of Boethius:—but there is, after all, considerable difficulty in deciding where, in such Ossianic measures, prose ends and verse begins. "Ealdum and leasum bispellum" are "the spells of olden leaven," which perhaps were intentionally omitted.—

XXIV. The Soul's Heritage.

Sunt etenim pennæ volucres mihi,——Quæ celsa consendant poli:

Ic hæbbe fithru
Fugle swiftran,
Mid thæm ic fleogan mæg
Feor fram eorthan,
Ofer heane hrof
Heofones thisses.
Ac thær ic nu mosta,
Mod, gefethran
Thinne ferth-locan,
Fethrum minum,

Oththæt thu meahte
Thisne middan geard,
Ælc eorthlic thing,
Eallunga forsion.
Meahtes ofer rodorum
Gereclice
Fetherum lacan;
Feor up ofer
Wolcnu windan,
Wlitan siththan ufan
Ofer ealle.
Meahtes eac faran
Ofer thæm fyre,
The fela geara for
Lange betweox
Lyfte and rodere;
Swa him æt frymthe,
Fæder getiode.
Thu meahtest the siththan,
Mid thære sunnan,
Faran betweox
Othrum tungium.
Meahtest the full recen,
On thæm rodere ufan,
Siththan weorthan;
And thonne samtenges
Æt thæm æl-cealdan,
Anum steorran,
Se yfmest is
Eallra tungla;
Thone Saturnus
Sund-buende hatath
Under heofonum.
He is se cealda
Eall isig tungel,
Yfemest wandrath,
Ofer eallum ufan
Othrum steorrum.
Siththan thu thonne
Thone upahafast,
Forth ofer-farenne,
Thu meaht feorsian.
Thonne hist thu siththan
Sona ofer uppan
Rodere ryne swiftum.
Gif thu riht færest,
Thu thone hehstan heofon
Behindan lætst.
Thonne meaht thu siththe
Sothes leohtes
Habban thinne dæl.
Thonan an cyning
Rume ricsath,
Ofer roderum up;
And under swa same,
Eallra gesceafta
Weorulde waldeth.
Thæt is wis cyning,
Thæt is se the waldeth,

Giond wer-thioda,
Ealra othra
Eorthan cyninga.
Se mid his bridle,
Ymbe bæted hæfth
Ymbhwyrft ealne
Eorthan and heofones.
He his gewald-lether
Wel gemetgath,
Se storeth á,
Thurh tha strongan'meaht,
Thæm hrædwæne
Heofones and eorthan.
Se an dema is,
Gestæththig,
Unawendendlic,
Wlitig and mære.
Gif thu wyrfst on
Wege rihtum,
Up to thæm earde,
Thæt is æthele stow,
Theah thu hi nu geta
Forgiten hæbbe.
Gif thu æfre
Eft thær an cymest,
Thonne wilt thu secgan,
And sona cwethan,
This is eallunga
Min agen cyth,
Eard and ethel.
Ic wæs ær hionan
Cumen and acenned,
Thurh thisses cræftgan meaht.
Nylle ic æfre hionan
Ut witan:
Ac ic symle her,
Softe wille,
Mid fæder willan,
Fæste stondan.
Gif the thonne æfre
Eft geweortheth,
Thæt thu wilt oththe most,
Weorolde thiostro,
Eft fandian,
Thu meaht eathe gesion
Unrihtwise
Eorthan cyningas,
And tha ofermodan
Othre rican,
The this werige folc
Wyrst tuciath;
Thæt he symle bioth
Swithe earme,
Unmehtige
Ælces thinges;
Emne tha ilcan,
The this earme folc,
Sume hwile nu,
Swithost ondrædeth.

I have wings like a bird, and more swiftly can fly
Far over this earth to the roof of the sky,
And now must I feather thy fancies, O mind,
To leave the mid earth and its earthlings behind.

Stretch'd over the heavens, thou mayst with thy wings
Sport in the clouds and look down on all things,
Yea, far above Fire, that lieth betwixt
The air and the sky, as the Father hath mixt.

Thence with the sun to the stars thou shalt fly,
Thereafter full quickly to float thro' the sky
To the lonely cold planet, which sea-dwellers call
Saturn, on heaven the highest of all.

He is the icy cold star in the highest
That wanders the farthest, and yet as thou fliest
Higher, and farther, and up shalt thou rise
Yea, to the top of the swift rushing skies!

If thou dost rightly, e'en these shalt thou leave:
And then of the true light thy share shalt receive,
Where up over heaven, the Only King reigns,
And under it all the world's being sustains.

This, the Wise King, this is He who is found
To rule o'er the kings of all peoples around;
With his bridle hath bitted the heaven and earth,
And guides the swift wain by his might driven forth.

He is the One Judge unswervingly right,
Unchanging in might and unsullied in light;
When to his dwelling place back thou dost roam,
However forgotten, it still is thy home.

If ever again thou shalt thitherward go,
Soon wilt thou say, and be sure it is so,
"This is mine own country in every way,
"The earth of my birth, and my heirdom for aye:

"Hence was I born, and came forth in my time
"Thro' the might of my Maker, the Artist sublime,
"Nor will I go out evermore but stand fast,
"At the will of my Father come hither at last."

And if it should aye be again that thou wilt
Come back to the world in its darkness and guilt,
Thou shalt easily see of these kings and these proud
Who worst have down-trodden this woeridden crowd,

That they too are wretched and woefully poor
Unmighty to do anything anymore,
These, ay even these, beneath whose dread yoke
Now somewhile are trembling this woeridden folk.

There is a good deal both of the poetic rapture and the philoso-

phic judgment in this ode: and Boethius, though enlarged upon, is pretty closely followed:

Huc te si reducem referat via,
Quam nunc requiris immemor,
Hæc, dices, memini patria est mihi:
Hinc ortus hic sistam gradum. &c.

However, all the Godliness of the poem is exclusively Alfred's: Boethius continually forgets the Christian in the philosopher.

XXV. Of Evil Kings.

Quos vides sedere celso——Solii culmine reges.

Geher nu an spell
Be thæm ofermodum
Unrihtwisum
Eorthan cyningum:
Tha her nu manegum
And mislicum
Wædum wlite-beorhtum
Wundrum scinath;
On heah-setlum,
Hrofe getenge:
Golde gegerede,
And gimcynnum;
Utan ymbe standne
Mid unrime
Thegna and eorla,
Tha bloth gehyrste
Mid here-geatwum,
Hilde torhtum;
Sweordum and fetelum
Swithe geglende;
And thegniath
Thrymme mycle
Ælc othrum;
And hi ealle him.
Thonan mid thy thrymme
Threatiath gehwider,
Ymb-sittenda
Othra theoda;
And se hlaford ne scrifth,
The thæm here waldeth,
Freonde ne feonde,
Feore ne æhtum;
Ac he rethig-mod,
Ræst on gehwilcne,
Rethe hunde
Wuhta gelicost.
Bith to upahæfen
Inne on mode,
For thæm anwalde,
The him anra gehwilc
His tir-wina
To fultemath.
Gif mon thonne wolde
Him awindan of
Thæs cyne-gerelum,—
Clatha gehwilcne,—
And him thonne oftion
Thara thegnunga,
And thæs anwaldes,
The he her hæfde;
Thonne meaht thu gesion
Thæt he bith swithe gelic
Sumum thara gumena,
The him geornost nu
Mid thegnungum
Thringath ymbe utan.
Gif hi wyrsa ne bith,
Ne wene ic his na beteran.
Gif him thonne æfre,
Unmendlinga,
Weas geberede,
Thæt him wurde oftogen
Thrymmes and wæda,
And thegnunga,
And thæs anwaldes
The we ymbe sprecath;
Gif him ænig thara
Ofhende wyrth,
Ic wat thæt him thinceth
Thæt he thonne sie
Becropen on carcern,
Oththe cothlice
Racentan geræped.
Ic gereccan mæg,
Thæt of ungemete
Ælces thinges,
Wiste and wæda,
Win-gedrinces,
And of swet-metann,
Swithost weaxath
Thære wrænnesse
Wod-thrag micel,
Sio swithe gedræfth
Sefan ingehygd
Monna gehwelces:
Thonan mæst cymeth
Yfla ofermeta,
Unnetta saca.
Thonne hi gebolgene weorthath
Him wyrth on breostum inne
Beswungen sefa on hrethre
Mid thæm swithan welme
Hat-heortnesse;
And hrethe siththan,
Unrotnesse
Eac gereæpeth,
Hearde gehæfted.
Him siththan onginth
Sum tohopa
Swithe leogan.
Thæs gewinnes wræce
Wilnath thæt irre
Anes and othres.
Him thæt eall gehæt
His receleat,
Rihtes ne scrifeth,
Ic the sæde ær
On thisse selfan bec,
Thæt sumes goodes
Sidra gesceafta,
Anlepra ælc
A wilnode,
For his agenum
Eald-gecynde.
Unrihtwise
Eorthan cyningas
Ne magon æfre thurhtion
Awuht goodes,
For thæm yfle,
The ic the ær sæde.
Nis thæt nan wundor,
Forthæm hi willath hi,
Thæm untheawum,
The ic the ær nemde,
Anra gehwelcum,
A undertheodan.

Sceal thonne nede
Nearwe gebugan
To thara hlaforda
Hæfte dome,
The he hine eallunga
Ær underthiodde.
Thæt is wyrse get,
Thæt he winnan nyle
Wid thæm anwalde,

Ænige stunde.
Thær he wolde á
Winnan onginnan,
And thonne on thæm gewinne,
Thurhwunian ford
Thonne næfde he
Nane scylde;
Theah he oferwunnen
Weorthan sceolde.

Hear now a spell of the proud overbearing
Kings of the earth, when unrighteous in mind:
Wondrously bright tho' the weeds they are wearing,
High tho' the seats where their pomp is enshrin'd,
Goldclad and gemm'd and with hundreds roundstanding
Thanes and great earls with their chain and their sword,
All of them chieftains in battle commanding,
Each in his rank doing suit to his lord:

While in such splendour each rules like a savage,
Every where threatning the people with strife,
Lo, this lord heeds not, but leaves them to ravage
Friends for their riches and foes for their life!
Ay, and himself, like a hound that is madden'd,
Flies at and tears his poor people for sport,
In his fierce mind too loftily gladden'd
With the proud power his chieftains support.

But, from his robes if a man should unwind him,
Stripp'd of such coverings kingly and gay,
Drive all his following thanes from behind him,
And let his glory be taken away;
Then should ye see that he likens most truly
Any of these who so slavishly throng
Round him with homage demurely and duly,
Neither more right than the rest, nor more wrong.

If then to him it should chance in an hour
All his bright weeds from his back be offstripped,
All that we speak of, his pomp and his power,
Glories unravell'd and garments unripp'd,—
If these were shredded away, I am thinking,
That it would seem to him surely as though
He to a prison had crept, and was linking
All that he had to the fetters of woe.

Rightly I reckon that measureless pleasure,
Eating and drinking and sweetmeats and clothes,
Breed the mad waxing of lust by bad leisure
Wrecking the mind where such wickedness grows:
Thence cometh evil, and proud overbearing;
Quarrels and troubles arise from such sin,
When in the breast hotheartness is tearing
With its fierce lashes the soul that's within.

Afterward, sorrow imprisons and chains him;
Then does he hope, but his hope is a lie:
Then again, wrath against somebody pains him,
Till he has recklessly doom'd him to die.
In this same book before I was speaking,
Everything living is wishing some good
But the bad kings of the earth, who are wreaking
Nothing but ill, as is fitting they should.

That is no wonder, for slaves very willing
Are they to sins,—as I told thee before,—
And to those lords whose chains they are filling
Straitly and strictly must bend evermore:
This is yet worse, they will not be winning
Standing-room even against such ill might;
Still, if they will, they struggle unsinning,
Tho' they should seem overthrown in the fight.

A striking picture of a tyrannical lord paramount surrounded by his feudal barons and princes. It is an old legend in the life of Alfred that he began his reign rather too roughly, insomuch that St Neot rebuked him for harshness: whereupon the king repented: in this view it is a fine trait to see the great monarch in the zenith of his power utterly denouncing evil kings: it is like David's penitence: a witness, indeed, against his past sin, but far more strenuously testifying his present holiness.

XXVI. Of Circe and her company.

Vela Neritii ducis,——Et vagas pelago rates

Ic the mæg eathe,
Ealdum and leasum
Spellum and reccan
Spræce gelicne
Efne thisse ilcan,
The wit ymsprecath.
Hit geamide gio,
On sume tide,
Thæt Aulixes
Under-hæfde
Thæm Casere
Cyne-ricu twa.
He wæs Thracia
Thioda aldor;
And Retie
Rices hirde.
Wæs his frea-drihtnes
Folc-cuth nama
Agamemnon;
Se ealles weald
Creca rices.
Cuth wæs wide,
Thæt on tha tide,
Troiana gewin
Wearth under wolcnum.
For wiges-heard,
Creca drihten,
Camp-sted secan.
Aulixes mid
An hund scipa
Lædde ofer lagu-stream,
Sæt longe thær,—
Tyn winter full.
Tha sio tid gelomp,
Thæt hi thæt rice
Geræht hæfdon,
Diore geceptе
Drihten Creca,
Troia burh,
Tilum gesithum;
Tha tha Aulixes
Leafe hæfde,
Thracia cyning,
Thæt he thonan moste,
He let him behindan,
Hyrnde ciolas,
Nigon and hund nigontig.
Nænige thonan
Mere-hengesta
Ma thonne ænne,
Perede on fifel stream,
Famig-bordon;
Thrierethre ceol;
Thæt bith thæt mæste
Creciscra scipa.
Tha wearth ceald weder,
Steare-storma gelac:
Stunede sio brune
Yth with othre,
Ut feor adraf
On wendel-sæ,
Wigendra scola,
Up on thæt igland,
Thær Apollines
Dohtor wunode,
Dæg-rimes worn.
Wæs se Apollinus
Ætheles cynnes,
Iobes eafora,
Se wæs gio cyning;
Se lioette
Litlum and miclum,
Gumena gehwylcum,
Thæt he God wære,
Hehst and halgost.
Swa se hlaford tha,
Thæt dysige folc
On gedwolan lædde,
Oththæt him gelyfde
Leoda unrim;
Forthæm he wæs mid rihte
Rices hirde,
Hiora cyne-cynnes.
Cuth is wide
Thæt on tha tide,
Theoda æghwilc hæfdon
Herora hlaford
For thone hehstan God;
And weorthodon,
Swa swa wuldres cyning;
Gif he to thæm rice wæs
On rihte boren.
Wæs thæs lobes fæder
God eac swa he.
Saturnus thone
Sund-buende
Heton hæietha bearn:
Hæfdon tha mægtha,
Ælcne æfter othrum,
Por ecne God.
Sceolde eac wesan
Apollines,
Doothr dior-boren,
Dysiges folces,
Gum-rinca gyden;
Cuthe galdra fela
Drifan dryeræftas.
Hio gedwolan fylgde
Manna swithost,
Manegra thioda.
Cyninges dohtor
Sio Circe wæs
Haten for herigum.
Hio ricsode
On thæm iglonde,
The Aulixes
Cyning Thracia,
Com ane to
Ceole lithan.
Cuth wæs sona
Ealire thære mænige
The hire mid wunode,
Æthelinges sith.
Hio mid ungemete
Lissum lufode
Lith-monna frea;
And he eac swa same,
Ealle mægne,
Efne swa swithe,
Hi on sefan lufode;
Thæt he to his earde
Ænige nyste
Modes mynlan,
Ofer mægth giunge;
Ac he mid thæm wife
Wunode siththan;
Oththæt him ne meahte
Monna ænig
Thegna sinra
Thær mid wesan;
Ac hi for thæm yrmthum
Eardes lyste,
Mynton forlætan
Leofne hlaford.
Tha ongunnon wercan
Wer-theoda spell;
Sædon thæt hio sceolde,
Mid hire scinlace,
Beornas forbredan;
And mid balo-cræftum
Wrathum weorpan,
On wildra lic
Cyninges thegnas:
Cyspan siththan,

And mid racentan eac,
Ræpan mænigne.
Sume hi to wulfum wurdou,
Ne meahton thonne word ferth-
bringan;
Ac hio thrag-mælum
Thioton ongunnon.
Sume wæron eaforas,
A grymetedon,
Thonne hi sares hwæt
Siofian scioldon.
Tha the leon wæron
Ongunnon lathlice
Yrrenga rynan,
Thonne hi sceoldon
Clipian for corthre.
Cnihtas wurdon,
Ealde ge giunge,
Ealle forhwerfde
To sumum diore,
Swelcum he æror,
On his lif-dagum,
Gelicost wæs;
Butan tham cyninge,
The sio cwen lufode.
Nolde thara othra,
Ænig onbitan
Mennisces metes;
Ac hi ma lufedon
Diora drohtath,
Swa hit gedefe ne wæs.
Næfdon hi mare
Monnum gelices,
Eorth-buendum,
Thonne ingethonc
Hæfde anra gehwylc
His agen mod;
Thæt wæs theah swithe
Sorgum gebunden,
For thæm earfothum
The him onsæton.
Hwæt tha dysegan men,
The thysum drycræftum
Long lyfdon
Leasum spellum,
Wisson hwæthre,
Thæt thæt gewit ne mæg
Mod onwendan,—
Monna ænig
Mid drycraeftum:
Theah hio gedon meahte
Thaet tha lichoman
Lange thrage
Onwend wurdon.
Is thaet wundorlic
Maegen craeft micel,
Moda gehwilces
Ofer lichoman
Laenne and saenne!
Swylcum and swylcum,
Thu meaht sweotole ongitan,
Thaet thaes lichoman
Listas and craeftas,
Of thaem mode cumath
Monna gehwylcum,
Ælepra aelc.
Thu meaht eathe ongitan
Thaet te ma dereth
Monna gehwylcum
Modes untheaw,
Thonne mettrymnes
Lænes lichoman.
Ne thearf leoda nan
Wenan thære wyrde,
Thæt thæt werige flæsc
Thaet mod
Monna æniges,
Eallunga to him
Æfre maeg onwendan;
Ac tha untheawas
Ælces modes.
And thaet ingethonc
Ælces monnes,
Thone lichoman lit
Thider hit wile.

From old and leasing spells right easily
Can I to thee tell out a tale like that
Whereof we lately spake.—It chanced of yore
That, on a time, Ulysses held two kingdoms
Under his Cæsar: he was prince of Thrace,
And ruled Neritia as its shepherd king.
His head-lord's folk-known name was Agamemnon
Who wielded all the greatness of the Greeks.
At that time did betide the Trojan war
Under the clouds well known: the warrior chief,
Lord of the Greeks, went forth to seek the battle.
Ulysses with him led an hundred ships
Over the sea, and sat ten winters there.
When the time happen'd that this Grecian lord
With his brave peers had overthrown that kingdom
The dear-bought burgh of Troy,—Ulysses then
The king of Thracia, when his lord gave leave
That he might hie him thence, he left behind
Of all his horn'd sea-keels ninety and nine.

Thence, none of those sea horses, saving one,
Travell'd with foamy sides the fearful sea;
Save one, a keel with threefold banks of oars,
Greatest of Grecian ships. Then was cold weather,
A gathering of stark storms; against each other
Stunn'd the brown billows, and out-drove afar
On the Mid-winding sea the shoal of warriors,
Up to that island, where, unnumbered days,
The daughter of Apollo wont to dwell.
This same Apollo was of highborn kin,
Offspring of Jove, who was a king of yore.
He schemed so, as to seem to every one,
Little and great, that he must be a God,
Highest and holiest! So the silly folk
This lord did lead thro' lying ways, until
An untold flock of men believed in him:
For that he was with right the kingdom's chief
And of their kingly kin. Well is it known
That in those times each people held its lord
As for the God most high, and worshipp'd him
For King of Glory,—if with right of rule
He to the kingdom of his rule was born.
The father of this Jove was also a God,
Even as he: him the sea-dwellers call
Saturn: the sons of men counted these kin
One after other as the ever Good!
Thus also would Apollo's high born daughter
Be held a goddess by the senseless folk,
Known for her druid-craft, and witcheries.
Most of all other men she followed lies;
And this king's-daughter, Circe was she hight,
Circe for Church, as having many with her.
She ruled this isle, whereto the Thracian king
Ulysses, with one ship, happened to sail.
Soon was it known, to all the many there
That dwelt with her, the coming of the prince,
She without measure loved this sailor-chief,
And he alike with all his soul loved her,
So that he knew not any love more deep
Even of home, than as he loved this maiden;

But lived with her for wife long afterward;
Until not one of all his thanes would stay,
But, full of anguish for their country's love,
They meant to leave behind their well loved lord.
Then on the men she 'gan to work her spells;
They said, she should by those her sorceries
Make the men prone like beasts: and savagely
Into the bodies of wild beasts she warp'd
By baleful craft the followers of the King.
Then did she tie them up, and bind with chains.
Some were as wolves; and might not then bring forth
A word of speech; but now and then would howl.
Some were as boars; and grunted ever and aye,
When they should sigh a whit for sorest grief.
They that were lions, loathly would begin
To roar with rage when they would call their comrades
The knights, both old and young, into some beast
Were chang'd as each aforetime was most like
In his life's day: but only not the king,
Whom the queen loved: the others, none would bite
The meat of men, but loved the haunt of beasts,
As was ill fitting; they to men earth-dwellers
Had no more likeness left than their own thought.
Each still had his own mind, tho' straitly bound
With sorrow for the toils that him beset.
For e'en the foolish men who long believed
Thro' leasing spells in all this druidcraft,
Knew natheless that no man might change the wit,
Or mind, by such bad craft: tho' they might make
That for long while the bodies should be changed.
Wonderful is that great and mighty art
Of every mind above the mean dull body.
By such and such things thou mayest clearly know
That from the mind come one by one to each
And every man his body's lusts and powers.
Easily mayst thou see that every man
Is by his wickedness of mind more harm'd
Than by the weakness of his failing body.
Nor need a man ween ever such weird-chance,
As that the wearisome and wicked flesh

Could change to it the mind of any man,
But the bad lusts of each mind, and the thought
Of each man, lead his body where they will.

A few things require a word or two of comment in this poem. "The tale whereof we lately spake," in Alfred's original introduction, probably was that of Orpheus and Eurydice, omitted as unmetrical from our 23rd metre. A Cæsar, a Kaisar, or perhaps a Czar, (tsar in Persian) means to a Northman a headman, or king paramount, as was Agamemnon. 'Rices-herden' may fairly be rendered shepherd king: so also 'hyrnde ciolas,' horned keels; or, as we should less literally put it, beaked prows. The Fifel-stream, is probably the archipelago: as the Wendel-sæ, or winding sea, is the Mediterranean. Take notice how clearly Alfred deduces idolatry from king and heroworship: not a word of all this wholesome homilizing occurs in Boethius. He calls sorceries, 'drycraeftas' druidcrafts. He plays upon the word Circe,—which also means in Anglo-Saxon a kirk or church, as accounting for her many followers. Cnihtas is here rendered knights; which may not be strictly accurate; it is something like making a Childe, a child; however it conveys the sense as well as the sound better than 'men' or 'followers.' How finely Alfred drains the moral of these false enchantments, and asserts the mind's supremacy.

XXVII. Of Tolerance.

Quid tantos juvat excitare motus,——Et propria fatum sollicitare manu?

Hwy ge æfre scylen
Unriht-floungum
Eower mod drefan,
Swa awa mere flodes
Ytha hrerath
Is-calde sæ,
Wecggath for winde?
Hwy othwite ge
Wyrde eowre,
Thæt hio geweald nafath?
Hwy ge thæs deathes
The eow Drihten gesceop
Gebidan ne magon,
Bitres gecyndes;
Nu he eow ælce dæg
Onet toweard?
Ne magon ge gesion
Thæt he symle spyreth
Æfter æghwelcum
Eorthan tudre,
Diorum and fuglum?
Death eac swa same
Æfter mon-cynne,
Geond thisne middan geard,
Egeslic hunta!
Abit on wathe.
Nyle heænig swæth
Æfre forlætan,
Ær he gebede
Thæt he hwile ær
Æfter spyrede.
Is thæt earmlic thing,
Thæt his gebidan ne magon
Burg-sittende;
Ungesælige men
Hine ær willath
Foran tosciotan.
Swa swa fugla cyn,
Oththe wildu dior,
Tha winnath betwuh,
Æghwylc wolde
Other acwellan.
Ac thæt is unriht,
Æghwelcum men,

Thæt he otherne,
Inwit-thoncum,
Fioge on færthe,
Swa swa fugl oththe dior.
Ac thæt wære rihtost,
Thæt te rinca gehwylc
Othrum gulde
Edlean on riht,
Weorc be geweorhtum
Weoruld-buendum,
Thinga gehwilces:

Thæt is thæt he lufige
Godra gehwilcne,
Swa he geornost mæge;
Mildsige yflum,
Swa we [ær] spræcon.
He sceal thone monnan
Mode lufian,
And his untheawas
Ealle hatian,
And ofsnithan,
Swa he swithost mæge.

Why ever your mind will ye trouble with hate,
As the icy-cold sea when it rears
Its billows waked-up by the wind?
Why make such an out-cry against your weird fate,
That she cannot keep you from fears,
Nor save you from sorrows assign'd?

Why cannot ye now the due bitterness bide
Of death, (as the Lord hath decreed,)
That hurries to-you-ward each day?
Now can ye not see him still tracking beside
Each thing that is born of earth's breed,
The birds and the beasts, as ye may?

Death also for man in like manner tracks out,
Dread hunter! this middle earth through,
And bites as he runs evermore;
He will not forsake, when he searches about,
His prey, till he catches it too
And finds what he sought for before.

A sad thing it is, if we cannot await
His bidding, poor burghers of earth,
But wilfully strive with him still;
Like birds or wild beasts, when they haste in their hate
To rage with each other in wrath
And wrestle to quell and to kill.

But he that would hate in the deep of his heart
Another, unrighteous is he,
And worse than a bird or a beast;
But blest is the man who would freely impart
To a brother, whoever he be,
Full worth for his work at the least:

That is, he should love all the good at his best,
And tenderly think of the bad,
As we have spoken before;
The Man he should love with his soul—for the rest
His sins he should hate, and be glad
To see them cut off evermore.

A beautiful improvement and enlargment upon the 12 lines of Boethius: who however ends with a very fair apothegm,

Dilige jure bonos, et miseresce malis:

yet, how much better is Alfred's truly Christian sentiment, Hate the sin, but love the sinner!

XXVIII. Of Heavenly Wonders.

Si quis Arcturi sidera nescit——Propinqua summo cardine labi.

Hwa is on eorthan nu
Unlærdra,
The ne wundrige
Wolcna færeldes,
Rodres swifto,
Ryne tunglo;
Hu hy ælce dæge
Utan ymbhwerfeth
Ealine middan geard?
Hwa is mon-cynnes,
Thæt ne wundrie ymb
Thas wlitegan tungl;
Hu hy sume habbath
Swithe micle
Scyrtran ymbehwearft;
Sume scrithath leng
Utan ymb eall this?
An thara tungla
Woruld-men hatath
Wænes thisla.
Tha habbath scyrtran
Scrithe and færeld,
Ymbhwerft læssan
Thonne othru tungl;
Forthæm hi thære eaxe
Utan ymbhwerfeth,
Thonne north-ende
Nean ymbcerreth.
On thære ilcan
Eaxe hwerfeth
Eall ruma rodor;
Recene scritheth,
Suth-heald swifeth
Swift untiorig.
Hwa is on worulde,
Thæt ne wafige,
Buton tha ane,
The hit ær wisson,
Thæt mænig tungul
Maran ymbhwyrft
Hafath on heofonum;
Sume hwile eft,
Læsse gelithath,
Tha the lacath ymb eaxe ende.
Oththe micle mare
Geferath tha hire mid ore,
Ymbe thearle thrægeth.
Thara is gehaten
Saturnus sum,
Se hæfth ymb thritig
Winter-gerimes
Weoruld ymbcyrred.
Bootes eac
Beorhte scineth,
Other steorra cymeth
Efne swa same,
On thone ilcan stede,
Eft ymb thritig
Gear-gerimes,
Thær hi gio tha wæs.
Hwa is weoruld-monna,
Thæt ne wafige
Hu sume steorran
Oth tha sæ farath,
Under mere-streamas
Thæs the monnum thinceth?
Swa eac sume wenath,
Thæt sio sunne do.
Ac se wena nis
Wuhte the sothra.
Ne bith hio on æfen,
Ne on ær-morgen,
Mere-streame tha near,
The on midne dæg;
And theah monnum thynceth,
Thæt hio on mere gange,
Under sæ swife,
Thonne hio on setl glideth.
Hwa is on weoruld,
Thæt ne wundrige
Fulles monan,
Thonne he færinga
Wyrth under wolcnum
Wlites bereafad,
Betheaht mid thiostrum?
Hwa thegna ne mæge
Eac wafian
Ælces stiorran?
Hwy hi ne scinen
Scirum wederum
Befora thære sunnan,
Swa hi symle doth
Middel nihtum,
With thone monan foran,
Hadrum heofone?
Hwæt nu hæletha fela

Swelces and swelces
Swithe wundrath;
And ne wundriath
Thæt te wuhta gehwilc,
Men and netenu,
Micelne habbath
And unnetne
Andan betweoh him,
Swithe singalne?
Is thæt sellic thincg
Thæt hi ne wundriath
Hu hit on wolcnum oft
Hearle thunrath;
Hrag-mælum eft
Anforlæteth?
And eac swa same,
Yth with lande
Ealneg winneth;
Wind with wæge.
Hwa wundrath thæs?
Oththe othres eft,
Hwy thæt is mæge
Weorthan of wætere?
Wlite torht scineth
Sunna swegle hat;
Sona gecerreth
Is mere ænlic
On his agen gecynd,
Weortheth to wætre.
Ne thincth thæt wundor micel,
Monna ænegum,
Thæt he maege geseon
Dogora gehwilce;
Ac thæet dysie folc

Thæt hit seldnor gesihth
Swithor wundriath:
Theah hit wisra gehwaem
Wundor thince
On his mod-sefan
Micle læsse.
Under-statholfæste
Ealneg wenath,
Thæt thæt eald gesceaft
Æfre ne wære,—
Thæt hi seldon gesioth;
Ac swithor giet,
Weoruld-men wenath
Thæt hit weas come,
Niwan gesælde;
Gif hiora nængum,
Hwylc ær ne otheowde.
Is thæt earmlic thinc!
Ac gif hiora ænig
Æfre weortheth,
To thon firwet-georn.
Thæt he fela onginth
Leornian lista,
And him lifes weard
Of mode abrit
Thæt micle dysig,
Thæt hit oferwrigen mid
Wunode lange;
Thonne ic thæt geare,
Thæt hi ne wundriath
Mæniges thinges,
The monnum nu
Wærtho and wunder
Wel hwær thynceth.

Who now is so unlearned among people of the world,
As not to wonder at the clouds upon the skies unfurl'd,
The swiftly rolling heavens and the racing of the stars,
How day by day they run around this mid earth in their cars:

Who then of men doth wonder not these glittering stars to see,
How some of them round-wafted in shorter circles be,
And some are wanderers away, and far beyond them all,
And one there is which worldly men the Wain with shafts do call.

These travel shorter than the rest, with less of sweep and swerve
They turn about the axle, and near the north-end curve,
On that same axle quickly round turns all the roomy sky,
And swiftly bending to the south untiring doth it fly.

Then who is there in all the world that is not well amazed
(Save those alone who knew before the stars on which they gazed)
That many some-whiles on the heavens make a longer bend,
And some-whiles less, and sport about the axle of the End:

Or else much more they wander quickly round the midway spheres
Whereof is one, hight Saturn, who revolves in thirty years,
Bōotes also, shining bright, another star that takes
His place again in thirty years of circle that he makes.

Who is there then of worldly men, to whom it doth not seem
A thing most strange that many stars go under the sea-stream,
As likewise some may falsely ween that also doth the sun,
But neither is this likeness true, nor yet that other one.

The sun is not at eventide, nor morning's early light
Nearer to the sea-stream than in the mid-day bright,
And yet it seems to men she goes her wandering sphere to lave
When to her setting down she glides beneath the watery wave.

Who is there in the world will wonder not to gaze
Upon the full-moon on his way, bereft of all his rays,
When suddenly beneath the clouds he is beclad with black?
And who of men can marvel not at every planet's track?

Why shine they not before the sun in weather clear and bright,
As ever on the stilly sky before the moon at night?
And how is it that many men much wondering at such
Yet wonder not that men and beasts each other hate so much?

Right strange it is they marvel not how in the welkin oft
It thunders terribly, and then eftsoons is calm aloft,
So also stoutly dashes the wave against the shore
And fierce against the wave the wind uprises with a roar!

Who thinks of this? or yet again, how ice of water grows,
And how in beauty on the sky the bright sun hotly glows,
Then soon to water, its own kin, the pure ice runs away;
But men think that no wonder, when they see it every day.

This senseless folk is far more struck at things it seldom sees,
Though every wise man in his mind will wonder less at these;
Unstalworth minds will always think that what they seldom see
Never of old was made before, and hardly now can be.

But further yet, the worldly men by chance will think it came,
A new thing, if to none of them had ever happ'd the same;
Silly enough!—yet if of them a man begins to thirst
For learning many lists and lores that he had scorn'd at first,

And if for him the Word of life uncovers from his wit
The cloke of that much foolishness which overshadow'd it,
Then well of old I wot he would not wonder at things so
Which now to men most worthily and wonderfully show.

To teach his ignorant people all that he himself had learnt, was ever our Great King's aim: and so in these poems, likely enough then soon to become the ballads of the poor sung from village to village by the welcome wandering minstrels, Alfred has sought to include a little piece of every kind of knowledge. Here then we have the astronomy of those times, aod meteorology, and other daily unnoticed wonders touched upon. The 'northende,' the 'eaxe' of the 'ruma' sky, and all the wandering stars round it are the subject of this verse; which ends as always with a recognition of the gracious Word of Life: and the same sort of thing is still further enlarged upon in our next metre.

XXIX. Of the Stars and Seasons.

Si vis celsi jura tonantis,——Pura sollers cernere mente.

Git thu nu wilnige
Weoruld-Drihtnes
Heane anwald
Hlutre mode
Ongitan giorne;
Gemal-mægene
Heofones tunglu;
Hu hi him healdath betwuh
Sibbe singale,
Dydon swa lange.
Swa hi gewenede
Wuldres ealdor,
Æt frum-sceafte,
Thæt slo fyrene mot
Sun ne gesecan
Snaw cealdes weg,
Monna gemæro.
Hwæt tha mæran tungl
Auther othres rene
A ne gehrineth,
Ær tham thæt other
Ofgewiteth.
Ne huru se steorra
Gestigan wile
West-dæl wolcna,
Thone wise men
Ursa nemnath.
Ealle stiorran
Sigath æfter sunnan,
Samod mid rodere,
Under eorthan grund.
He ana stent.
Nis thæt nan wundor;
He is wundrum fæst
Upende neah
Eaxe thæs roderes.
Thonne is an steorra,
Ofer othre beorht;
Cymeth eastan up
Ær thonne sunne;
Thone monna bearn,
Morgen-stiorra hatath,
Under heofonum:
Forthæm he hælethum dæg
Bodath æfter burgum;
Brengeth æfter
Swegeltorht sunne,
Samad eallum dæg.
Is se forrynel
Fæger and sciene;
Cymeth eastan up
Ærror sunnan;
And eft æfter sunnan,
On setl glideth,
West under weorulde.
Wer-thioda his
Noman onwendath,
Thonne niht cymeth;
Hatath hine ealle
Æfen-stiorra.
Se bith thære sunnan swiftra,
Siththan hi on setl gewitath,
Ofirneth:
Thæt is æthele tungol,—
Oth thæt he be eastan weortheth,
Eldum othewed,
Ær thonne sunne.
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . habbath,
Æthele tungol—
Emne gedæled
Dæg and nihte,
Drihtnes meahtum.
Sunnes and mona,
Swithe gethwære;
Swa him æt frymthe,
Fæder getiohhode.
Ne thearft thu no wenan
Thæt tha wlitegan tungl
Thaes theowdomes
Athroten weorthe
Ær domes dæge.
Deth siththan ymbe
Moncynnes fruma, —
Swa him gemet thinceth.——
Forthon hi he healfe
Heofones thisses
On ane ne læt
Ælmihtig God,
Thy læs hi othra fordyden
Æthela gesceafta,
Ac se eac God
Ealle gemetgath
Sida gesceafta,
Softa gethwerath.
Hwilum thæt drige
Drift thone wætan,
Hwylum hi gemengeth,
Metodes cræfte,
Cile with hæto.
Hwilum cerreth eft
On up rodor.
Æl beorhta leg.

Læht lyfte,
Ligeth him behindan
Hefig hrusan dæl;
Theah hit hwilan ær
Eorthe sio cealde
On inna hire
Heold and hydde,
Haliges meahtum.
Be thæs cyninges gebode,
Cymeth geara gehwæm,
Eorthe bringeth
Æghwylc tudor:
And se hata sumor,
Hæletha bearnum,
Geara gehwilce,
Giereth and drigeth
Geond sidne grund,
Sæd and bleda:
Hærfest to honda
Her buendum,
Ripa receth.
Ren æfter thæm,
Swylce hagal and snaw,
Hrusan leccath,
On wintres tid,—
Weder unhiore.
For thæm eorthe onfehth
Eallum sædum,
Gedeth thæt hi growath.
Geara gehwilce,
On lencten tid,
Leaf up spryttath.
Ac se milda metod,
Monna bearnum,
On eorthan fet
Eall thæt te groweth
Wæstmas on weorolde;
Wel forthbrengeth hit,
Thonne he wile,
Hefona waldend:
And eowath eft
Eorth-buendum;
Nimth thonne he wile
Nergende God.
And thæt hehste good
On heah setle

Siteth self cyning;
And thios side geceaft
Thenath and thiowath.
He thone anwaldeth
Thæm geweltlethum,—
Weoruld geceafta.
Nis thæt nan wundor,
He is weroda God,
Cyning and Drihten
Cwucera gehwelces;
Ælwalm and fruma
Eallra geceafta;
Wyrhta and sceppend
Weorulde thisse;
Wisdom and æ
Woruld-buendra.
Ealle geceafta
On hærendo:
Hio nane ne sendath
Thæt eft cumath.
Gif he swa gestæththig
Ne statholade
Ealle geceafta.
Æghwylc hiora
Wrathe tostencte
Weorthan sceolden;
Æghwylc hiora
Ealle to nauhte
Weorthan sceoldon,
Wrathe toslopena.
Theah tha ane lufe
Ealle geceafta
Heofones and eorthan
Hæbben gemæne,
Thæt hi thiowien
Swilcum thiod-fruman,
And fægniath thæt
Hiora fæder waldeth.
Nis thæt uan wundor;
Forthæm wuhta nan
Æfre ne meahte
Elles wunian;
Gif hi eall mægene
Hiora ord-fruman
Ne thiowoden,
Theodne mærum!

If now thou art willing the lord of the world
His highness and greatness clearsighted to see,
Behold the huge host of the heavens unfurl'd
How calmly at peace with each other they be!

At the first forming the Glorified Prince
Order'd it so that the sun should not turn
Nigh to the bounds of the moon ever since
Nor the cold path of the snow circle burn.

Nay, the high stars never cross on the skies
Ere that another has hurried away;
Nor to the westward will ever uprise
Ursa the star,—so witting men say.

All of the stars set after the sun
Under the ground of the earth with the sky:
That is no wonder; for only this one,
The axle, stands fastly and firmly on high.

Again, there's a star more bright than them all,
He comes from the east before the sun's birth,
The star of the morning,—thus him ever call
Under the heavens the children of earth.

For that he bodes day's-dawn to men's homes
After him bringing the sun in his train,
Fair from the east this forerunner comes
And glides to the west all shining again.

People rename him at night in the west,
Star of the evening then is he hight,
And when the setting sun goes to her rest,
He races her down more swift than the light.

Still he outruns her, until he appears
Again in the east, forerunning the sun,
A glorious star, that equally clears
The day and the night, ere his racing be run.

Thro' the Lord's power, the sun and the moon
Rule as at first by the Father's decree;
And think not thou these bright shiners will soon
Weary of serfdom till domesday shall be:

Then shall the Maker of man at his will
Do with them all that is right by and bye:
Meanwhile the Good and Almighty one still
Setteth not both on one half of the sky,

Lest they should other brave beings unmake;
But, evergood, He still suffers it not;
Somewhiles the dry with the water will slake,
Somewhiles will mingle the cold with the hot.

Yea, by His skill, otherwiles will upsoar
Into the sky fire airily-form'd,
Leaving behind it the cold heavy ore
Which by the Holy One's might it had warm'd.

By the King's bidding it cometh each year
Earth in the summertime bringeth forth fruit,
Ripens and dries for the soildwellers here
The seed, and the sheaf, and the blade, and the [root.

Afterward rain cometh, hailing and snow,
Wintertide weather that wetteth the world,
Hence the earth quickens the seeds that they grow
And in the lententide leaves are uncurl'd.

So the Mild Maker for children of men
Feeds in the earth each fruit to increase,
Wielder of heaven! he brings it forth then;
Nourishing God!—or makes it to cease.

He, Highest Good, sits on his high seat
Self-king of all, and reins evermore
This his wide handiwork, made (as is meet)
His thane and his theow to serve and adore.

That is no wonder, for he is The King,
Lord God of hosts, each living soul's awe,
The source and the spring of each being and thing,
All the world's maker and wisdom and law.

Everything made,—on His errands they go,
None that he sendeth may ever turn back;
Had he not stablished and settled it so
All had been ruin and fallen to rack;

Even to nought would have come at the last:
All that is made would have melted away:
But in both heaven and earth, true and fast,
All have one love such a lord to obey,

And are full fain that their Father should reign;
That is no wonder, for else should each thing
Never have life, if they did not remain
True to their Maker, man's glorious King.

Very few words in these literally rendered metres are not pure unlatinized English,—the same as used by Alfred: even to forerunner, 'Forrynel,' 'wintres-tid,' and 'lencten-tid' and 'thios side gesceaft thenath and thiowath,' &c, and 'this wide handiwork is his thane and his theow'; &c.

XXX. Of the True Sun.

Puro clarum lumine Phœbum——Melliflui canit oris Homerus:

Omerus wæs
East mid Grecum,
On thæm leodscipe,
Leotha cræftgast;
Firgilies
Freond and lareow,
Thæm mæran sceope
Magistra betst.
Hwæt se Omerus
Oft and gelome
Thære sunnan wlite
Swithe herede;
Æthelo cræftas,
Oft and gelome,
Leothum and spellum,
Leodum reahte.
Ne mæg hio theah gescinan,
Theah hio sie scir and beorht,
Ahwærgen neah
Ealle gesceafta;
Ne furthum tha gesceafta
The hio gescinan mæg
Endemes ne mæg
Ealle geondlihtan
Innan and utan.
Ac se ælmihtega
Waldend and wyrhta
Weorulde gesceafta,
His agen weorc
Eall geondwliteth,
Endemes thurhsyhth
Ealle gesceafta.
Daeth is sio sothe
Sunne mid rihte be thæm
We magon singan
Swylc butan lease.

Homer, among the Eastern Greeks, was erst,
The best of bards in all that country-side;
And he was Virgil's friend and teacher first,
To that great minstrel master well allied.

And Homer often greatly praised the sun,
Her highborn worth, her skilfulness most true;
Often by song and story many a one
He to the people sang her praises due.

Yet can she not shine out, tho' clear and bright,
Everywhere near to every thing all ways,
Nor further, can she shed an equal light
Inside and out on all that meet her rays.

But the Almighty Lord of worldly things,
Wielder and Worker, brightly shines above
His own good workmanship, and round all flings
An equal blaze of skilfulness and love!

That is the true Sun, whom we rightly may
Sing without leasing as the Lord of Day.

Alfred is here commonly accused of an anachronism: but really without any cause. Was not Homer in spirit the friend and teacher of the Roman Epic Poet? if the Iliad had never existed, should we ever have heard of the Æneid?—No:—let us vindicate

the self-taught Anglo-Saxon even here; and not cease further to admire how he brings all his knowledge to the footstool of his God.—

XXXI. Of Man's Uprightness.

Hwæt thu meaht ongitan,
Gif his the geman lyst,
Thæt te mislice
Manega wuhta
Geond eorthan farath
Ungelice.
Habbath blioh and faerbu,
Ungelice
And maeg-wlitas.
Manegra cynna
Cuth and uncuth,
Creopath and scinath
Eall lichoma.
Eorthan getenge,
Nabbath hi aet fithrum fultum,
Ne magon hi mid fotum gangan,
Eorthan brucan,
Swa him eaden waes.
Sume fotum twam
Foldan peththath,
Sume fier-fete;
Sume fleogende
Windeth under wolcnum.

Bith theah wuhta gehwilc
Onhnigen to hrusan;
Hnipath of dune,
On weoruld wliteth;
Wilnath to eorthan;
Sume ned-thearfe,
Sume neod-fraece.
Man ana gaeth,
Metodes gesceafta,
Mid his andwlitan
Up on gerihte.
Mid thy is getacnod,
Thaet his treowa sceal,
And his mod-gethonc,
Ma up thonne nither
Habban to heofonum.
Thy læs he his hige wende
Nither swa thaer nyten.
Nis thaet gedafenlic
Thaet se mod-sefa
Monna aeniges
Nither-heald wese,
And thaet neb upweard.

Yet more, thou mayst know,
If it list thee to mind,
That many things go
Over earth in their kind,
Unlike to the view
In shape as in hue.

Known or unknown
Some forms of them all
On earth lying prone
Must creep and must crawl;
By feathers help'd not,
Nor walking with feet,
As it is their lot
Earth they must eat.

Twofooted these,
Fourfooted those,
Each one with ease
Its going wellknows,
Some flying high
Under the sky.

Yet to this earth
Is everything bound,
Bowed from its birth
Down to the ground,
Looking on clay
And leaning to dust,
Some as they may
And some as they must.
Man alone goes
Of all things upright,—
Whereby he shows
That his mind and his might
Ever should rise
Up to the skies.
Unless like the beast
His mind is intent
Downwards to feast,—
It cannot be meant
That any man
So far should sink
Upwards to scan
Yet—downwards to think!

This ends the list of the metrical paraphrases of Boethius, as given by King Alfred. A few of the odes were omitted by him,—probably from want of leisure to set them to music: but in the prose version of Boethius we shall probably find all such deficiencies supplied. Meanwhile, to make an end. The writer is more humbly aware than the severest possible critic would wish to make him, how little light he, for his part, has been able to throw upon Anglo-Saxon Metre in general. The fact seems to him to be, that there must have been supplied a running harp accompaniment which, with vocal adlibita also, made up the rhythm and possibly now and then the echoing rhyme, of the words as downwritten. Take any modern oratorio, and judge how little we can guess its melodies from the mere words. There would be naturally very little to guide us in words alone, if we remember that poetry in those early times of our tongue was far more the harper's craft than the scribe's. At the same time the present writer has so varied his measures (more often than Boethius) that, even be it but by chance, he may have lighted now and then on some approximation in English to the ancient poetry of the Anglo-Saxons.

KING ALFRED'S

PARLIAMENT AT SHIFFORD,

A METRICAL FRAGMENT FROM THE ANGLO-SAXON. *

At Shifford many thanes were set;
There book-learned bishops met,
Earls and knights, all awsome men,
And Alfric, wise in lawsome ken:

* We have to add the interesting fragment here appended: the authorship is disputable; but there is no doubt that it is a genuine echo of the words of Alfred, especially the latter part, the beautiful pathos of which, as addressed by the dying Alfred to his son and successor

There too England's own darling,
England's shepherd, England's king,
Alfred! them he truly taught
To live in duty as they ought.

Alfred, England's king and clerk,
Well he loved God's holy work:
Wise was he and choice in speech,
First of England skill'd to teach.

Thus quoth Alfred, England's love,
"Would ye live for God above?
"Would ye long that He may show
"Wiselike things for you to know,
"That you may world's worship gain,
"And your souls to Christ attain?"

Wise the sayings Alfred said;
"Christ the Lord I bid thee dread;
"Meekly, O mine own dear friend,
"Love and like him without end;
"He is Lord of life and love,
"Blest all other bliss above,
"He is Man, our Father true,
"And a meek mild Master too;
"Yea, our brother; yea, our king;
"Wise and rich in every thing,
"So that nought of His good will
"Shall be aught but pleasure still
"To the man who Him with fear
"In the world doth worship here."

Thus quoth Alfred, our delight;
"He may be no king of right
"Under Christ, who is not fill'd
"With book lore, in law wellskill'd;
"Letters he must understand,
"And know by what he holds his land."

Edward the Elder, is truly affecting. The Anglo-Saxon of this fragment has come down to us in a much more modern form, and is therefore not given here. The antiquary will hereafter find it among the original texts.

Thus quoth Alfred, England's praise,
England's pride and joy always:
" Earl and atheling
" Both be under the king,
" The land to lead
" With duteous deed;

" Both the clerk and the knight
" Equally hold by right:
" For as a man soweth
" Thereafter he moweth,
" And every man's doom
" Shall come to his home."

Thus quoth Alfred; " To the knight;
" 'Tis his wisdom and his right
" To lighten the land
" By the mower's hand
" Of harvest and of heregongs;
" To him it well belongs
" That the Church have peace
" And the churl be at ease
" His seeds to sow,
" His meads to mow,
" His ploughs to drive afield
" In our behoof to yield;
" This is the good knight's care
" To look that these well fare."

Thus quoth Alfred: " Wealth is but a curse,
" If wisdom be not added to the purse.
" Though a man hold an hundred and threescore
" Acres of tilth, with gold all covered o'er
" Like growing corn,—it all is nothing worth,
" Unless it prove his Friend, not Foe, on earth.
" For wherein, saving for good use alone,
" Does gold-ore differ from a simple stone?"

Thus quoth Alfred: " Never let the young
" Despair of good, nor give himself to wrong,

" Though to his mind right come not as it should,
" And though he take no joy in what he would.
" For Christ when he will
" Gives good after ill,
" And wealth by his grace
" In trouble's hard place,
" And happy the mind
" That to Him is resign'd."

Thus quoth Alfred:—" When a child is wise,
" That is indeed a father's blessed prize.
" Hast thou a child?—while yet a little one,
" In man's whole duty timely teach thy son;
" When he is grown, he still shall keep the track
" And for all cares and troubles pay thee back.
" But, if thou leave him to his evil will,
" When grown, such duties will be galling still,
" For thy bad teaching he shall curse thee sore,
" And shall transgress thy counsels more and more;
" Better for thee an unborn son, I wot,
" Than one whom thou the father chastenest not."

Thus quoth Alfred:—" If thou growest old,
" And hast no pleasure, spite of weal and gold,
" And goest weak;—then, thank thy Lord for this,
" That he hath sent thee hitherto much bliss,
" For life, and light and pleasures past away;
" And say thou, come and welcome, come what may!

Thus quoth Alfred:—" Worldly wealth and strength
" Come to the worms, and dust, and death at length,
" Though one be king of earth and all its power,
" He can but hold it for life's little hour.
" Thy glorious state will work thee grievous fate,
" Unless thou purchase Christ, before too late.
" Therefore in living well, at God's behest,
" By serving Him we serve ourselves the best.
" So, rest thou well that He will send thee aid,
" As Salomon the King right wisely said,
" He that does worthy good on earth has wit,
" At last he goeth where he findeth it."

Thus quoth Alfred:—"My dear son, come near,
"Sit thou beside, and I will teach thee here.
"I feel mine hour is well-nigh come, my son;
"My face is white; my days are almost done:
"Soon must we part; I to another throne,
"And thou in all my state shalt stand alone:
"I pray thee,—for mine own dear child thou art,
"Lord of this people, play their father's part,
"Be thou the orphan's sire, the widow's friend,
"Comfort the poor man, and the weak defend,
"With all thy might
"Succour the right,
"And be strong
"Against the wrong:
"And thou, my son, by law thyself restrain,
"So God shall be thy Guide, and glorious Gain;
"Call thou for help on Him in every need,
"And He shall give thee greatly to succeed.

And now, Reader, (by old prescription, "candid, gentle, and benevolent,") you here have had set out before you somewhat of the very mind of Alfred, and that as much as might be in his own pure words: a wholesome feast of reason and most curious interest; for the first time (though after a thousand years,) served in such sort as that you may confidently feed on it with ease, and perhaps not without pleasure.

You have here had evidence of the deep country's-love and high sense of duty that dwelt in our first great King of old: in that, notwithstanding the continual torments of a chronic disease, the constant vicissitudes of invasion or conquest, and the ceaseless cares and anxieties of government, Alfred still found time himself to learn, and then to teach his half barbarian people. To this end, he used the common speech of his own Anglo-Saxon realm, instead of the language of the learned: herein standing almost alone among the teachers, not only of that day, but of almost all others. Bede, Alcuin, and John Erigena, with every body else a thousand years ago, and all but every body ever since, wrote and taught in Latin: but it better pleased our noble-minded King to condescend to the instruction of his humblest subjects through the means of their mother-tongue.

Thus, as we have seen, he did his best to give them an insight, however small our more enlightened age may deem it, not only into those highest matters of morals and religion, but also into such good earthly food for man's mind here below, as physics, history, geography, astronomy. All this argued the King to be himself the liberal-minded scholar, as well as the pure-minded Christian: and in these more independent and democratic days of wide-spread knowledge, we cannot sufficiently estimate the good practically accomplished by such a man as Alfred, at once the Ruler and the Teacher of his people.

For the present version, let it be repeated that no attempt has been made to "improve upon" the original: and as little licence as possible has been permitted for filling up a stanza, or gaining a rhyme. So then if, according to the genius of the Anglo-Saxon fitte or song, Alfred aims at bringing the same sounds upon the ear, and the same sense upon the mind, over and over again, those modern abominations of criticism, alliteration and tautology, must be regarded not as faults but beauties; not symptoms either of carelessness or of a mere ear-tickling jingle, but marks of heedfulness and art, and according to the character of early bardic ballads. These metres, for the most part, are here rendered into such primitive English as that a Saxon may readily understand every word of them. But it does not follow that, because some words appear to be Latin, they are not also Anglo-Saxon: for instance Alfred uses some very similar to MAGISTER, CASTRUM, OVIS, CARCER, and many others: and, as every linguist is aware, there are several words which prove our common origin, being common to nearly every nation under heaven.

In conclusion, let the reader not read these modern thoughts of ours the last, but just look once again at those most touching words of Alfred to his son, wherewith, as a dying speech, we suitably make an end to these few snatches of his Poetry.

V.

HISTORY AND

POLITICAL STATE OF EUROPE

IN THE NINTH CENTURY,

The Age of King Alfred The Great.

HISTORY AND POLITICAL STATE OF EUROPE

IN THE NINTH CENTURY,

THE AGE OF KING ALFRED THE GREAT.

Although the period of general European history, from which it is proposed to offer some illustrations of the times of Alfred the Great, belongs, strictly speaking, to the latter half of the ninth century, it is from its earliest days that the point of departure will be most advantageously taken in an attempt to trace the series of changes which the states of Europe underwent in the course of the century, and to arrive at a satisfactory apprehension of the principles which were developing themselves in its political system.

The year 800 was rendered a memorable epoch by the investiture of the king of the Franks and Lombards with the ensigns of imperial dignity, at the hands of the pope, and amidst the acclamations of the Roman people; and if there be truth in the metaphor which represents the reign of Charlemagne as a bridge between two wild and gloomy regions,—the zone of barbarism on one side, and of feudalism on the other,—that event may be considered as the key-stone in the mighty fabric which his genius had reared or restored out of the ruins of the Western Empire. His reign, prolonged for fourteen years, was yet too short to admit of the empire's attaining, under the circumstances of the times, the coherence and stability indispensable to the maintenance of its integrity when his sceptre fell to feebler hands.

As in other instances of brilliant but transitory supremacy, both in ancient and modern times, its dissolution was as rapid as the conquests on which it was based.

Perhaps no period of European history, on a cursory view, presents a field more barren of interest than the age which succeeded the reign of Charlemagne. None can well oppose greater difficulties to an attempt to draw out from the tangled web of contemporary annals a thread of narrative which may serve for a guide through the confused labyrinth of events, and for a clue to the discovery of the conflicting elements which were indistinctly working out a new order of things in the political state of Europe. The mind recoils from contemplating the condition of anarchy and wretchedness into which society was again plunged; and neither the long series of intestine wars originating in the contests of the descendants of Charlemagne for fragments of his vast empire, nor their feeble struggles against the aggressions of the barbarous hordes which, when his powerful arm was withdrawn, renewed their assaults on all the frontiers,—alike inglorious,—shed any lustre on the annals of the age. Nor is it an easy task to trace on a chart of reduced compass the variable outlines of kingdoms created, severed, reunited or absorbed, and the vicissitudes of the empire, at times restored to almost its original integrity, till it was at length finally resolved into its constituent segments.

Some idea may be formed of the intricacy in which the details of this period of history are involved, from the fact that nearly forty of the immediate descendants of Charlemagne, Frankish emperors and kings, attained imperial or royal dignity, in the fluctuations of the times, within a century after his death; besides many other powerful chiefs, who in the final dismemberment of the empire carved out for themselves independent states, and sought to legitimatize their assumption of power by claims of descent from the great Emperor, in whose blood the Franks recognised the right of sovereignty, as in the heroic times of Greece all the great families traced their lineage from one common source.

But however intricate and uninviting the path which lies before us may, on a hasty glance, appear to be, if it is pursued with

diligence, it will open views circumscribed by no narrow and clouded horizon. Light breaks through the surrounding gloom. Amidst the general confusion which prevailed during the greater part of the ninth century,—international wars and barbarian invasions, the rivalry of imperfectly amalgamated races, with various elements of power struggling for supremacy, and none sufficiently preponderating to acquire the mastery,—amidst all these disorders, and springing out of these conflicts, may be discovered the germs of political systems destined to have an enduring influence in the frame of the European common-wealth. The foundations were being laid for the ascendancy of that territorial aristocracy which in the next century, under the organization of the feudal system, gave to Europe at least the benefits of external security with internal order and subordination. And from the dismemberment of the empire of Charlemagne sprung those national monarchies which,—for a long period overshadowed by the power of the nobles,—at length rose to supremacy, and subsisted until lately, under forms more or less constitutional, in the greater part of the European kingdoms. The history of the ninth century therefore requires a careful examination, if we wish to form precise ideas of the political state of Europe in the middle ages, and of the origin of those forms of government and territorial arrangements which have come down to our own times.

Nor can it be uninteresting, in such a work as this, to have that portion of European history, which comprises a period nearly contemporaneous with the life of Alfred the Great, sketched in lines parallel with his own; although there were but few occurrences, and no political relations, in that age, connecting the Anglo-Saxon kingdom with the states of the continent. Indeed for nearly six centuries after the severance of Britain from the Roman empire, its connection, both political and social, with the rest of Europe was very slight, except as respected ecclesiastical affairs, in which the missionary origin of the conversion of the Saxons linked it to the Holy See more intimately than any other national church. It was not till the Norman conquest, two centuries later, that those multiplied relations arose,—whether dynastic or territorial, of tenure, of institutions and of language, which, as it were, bridged over the channel and brought England again into the European system.

In the time of Alfred, the Frank kings were united by family compacts or engaged in mutual hostilities, to which the Anglo-Saxon monarch was equally alien. It might have been politic that both should have combined to form a powerful league against the northern invaders, the common enemy; but in those unsettled times each party was too much occupied with his own affairs to have any leisure either for forming or keeping up distant relations, and only strove with desultory efforts to repel the invaders from his own shores. On the whole, therefore, it is in the way of contrast, rather than of connexion, that the times of Alfred are to be viewed with reference to the other European kingdoms of that age.

The chronology of the century singularly facilitates a clear apprehension of its most important æras and events. It opens with the coronation of Charlemagne at Rome, the culminating point of his ambition, in the year 800; a most important epoch. Alfred was born towards the close of the first half of the century, just when the tripartite division of the empire had been consummated by the congress of Mersen in 847, a compact renewed in 849, the very year of Alfred's birth. That partition of the dominions of Charlemagne was a second memorable æra.

Alfred lived to see the close of the century, dying in 901, when the final dismemberment of the empire had been effected; Lewis third of that name and the last of the emperors of his blood, having been crowned in 900. Charles *le Sot*, the imbecile, retained but the shadow of power; for France, as well as nearly the whole of western Europe, was now parcelled out into a number of smaller kingdoms and independent dutchies and counties. Misrule and anarchy again prevailed. New swarms of barbarians of the race of the Huns, were ravaging the eastern frontier of Christendom; the Saracens had established themselves on the coasts of Italy and Provence; and the Normans were on the eve of wrenching from the feeble hands of Charles *le Sot* one of the finest provinces of France. The death of Alfred therefore nearly coincides with a third important epoch.

All interest in the political state of Europe during the ninth century centres in the Carlovingian empire, as it subsisted entire for nearly the first half of the century under Charlemagne and

his son Louis le Debonnair, and as it was apportioned and divided, during the second half, among their successors. The empire reunited nearly all the countries which had been subject to the rule of the Western Cæsars and had partaken of the Roman civilization. Viewed in its widest extent,—as including the tributary nations beyond the proper frontier,—the Elbe and the Baltic may be considered its extreme limits on the north; the Mediterranean, the Adriatic, or perhaps the Save, on the south; the Oder, the Carpathian mountains, the Danube or the Theiss on the east; and the ocean and narrow seas, from the gulf of Gascony to the mouth of the Elbe, on the west.

The first kingdoms founded by the Franks, after they crossed the Rhine, were those of Austrasia and Neustria, in Gaul, on the north of the Loire. Round these respective centres were grouped the kingdoms aud territories which were the fruits of their subsequent conquests. To Austrasia, having the Rhine and the Meuse for its northern and eastern boundaries, the Scheld on the west and the Vosges on the south, the victories of Pepin annexed the country between the Rhine, the Danube, and the Rhætian Alps, the antient Vindelicia; from which was formed the kingdom of Almaine or Bavaria. Those of Charlemagne northward on the Elbe added Saxony and Thuringia to the German branch of the empire.

In Gaul, the victorious arms of the Franks had gradually consolidated all the surrounding states with their original kingdom of Neustria. They became masters of the ancient Burgundian kingdom of the Goths between the Rhone and the Grecian Alps, from Provence on the shores of the Mediterranean to the Vosges where it met the Austrasian fontier, and to the sources of the Rhone; including, therefore, great part of modern Switzerland. The great province of Gothia or Septimania, afterwards called the Narbonnese, situated between the Rhone and the Garonne, with the dutchy of Gascony, extending from the Garonne to the Pyrenees, and bounded by the Atlantic on the west, completed the circuit of the south of Gaul. The central region, occupied by the Aquitani and lying between the two last named provinces and the circuitous course of the Loire, opposed the greatest resistance to the arms of the Franks. Their final subjugation was the first enterprise of Charlemagne's reign; and the kingdom of Aquitain,

subsequently founded, took its place among the satellite sovereignties of the Neustrian Franks. Brittany on the north-west, strong in its peninsular position, its rugged surface, and the brave and independent character of its ancient people, yielded a reluctant submission to the power of the great emperor; to whom its dukes, as well as those of Gascony in the south-west, rendered a doubtful allegiance. Thus the whole of Gaul was included in the dominions of the restored empire.

In Spain, the narrow angle of territory between the Pyrenees and the Ebro, the modern Catalonia, formed a province, with Barcelona for its capital, which was debateable ground between the Franks and the Saracens; and the counts of the Spanish marches guarded with difficulty that advanced frontier of the empire. In the valleys of the Asturias the descendants of the Christian exiles who escaped from the conquest of the Moors, joined to the hardy Basques, maintained their freedom and nourished their strength till the waning crescent should give the signal for rushing from their mountain fastnesses to restore the ancient kingdom of the Visigoths and re-establish the cross in the cities of Spain. With these small exceptions, the whole of the peninsula was included in the Saracen caliphate of Cordova; a section of Europe sufficiently important and interesting to demand hereafter a separate notice.

In Italy, the arms of Pepin had wrested from the Greek emperor the exarchate of Ravenna and the Pentapolis, as Romagna was then called,—on the shores of the Adriatic. His piety or his prudence had induced him to cede those territories to the Pope; but whatever rights beneficiary and administrative were conferred by that memorable dotation, it seems clear that those of suzerainty, at least, were reserved to himself and his successors, patricians of Rome and kings or emperors of the Franks. The Gothic kingdom of Lombardy, subjugated by Charlemagne, may be considered the central seat of the Frankish dominion in Italy, as the kingdoms of Austrasia and Neustria were in Germany and Gaul. With the iron crown of the Lombard kings Charlemagne assumed the style of king of Italy; and with their rich territories in the north—he succeeded to their rights over the great Lombard dukedom of Beneventum, in the south of the peninsula, composing more than half of the present kingdom of Naples; rights, however, fiercely

resisted by the powerful dukes who claimed independence in the government of that fine territory. Finally, when Charlemagne, king of the Franks and Lombards, was invested with the imperial crown, and hailed Cæsar and Augustus by the acclamations of the Roman people, he succeeded to the prerogatives of the western emperors over the city and state of Rome, and whatever rights those lofty titles gave him pretensions to assert; not the least of which was, that the election of the Popes was subject to his control and required the confirmation of the emperor. These prerogatives and the rights of suzerainty, as yet undefined, vested in such hands as Charlemagne's, conferred a real power over the most powerful vassals who struggled for independence in the government of their great fiefs.

The dominion of the Eastern emperors in Italy was now reduced to a fragment of territory and an empty title. Venice founded in the lagunes of the Adriatic by refugees from the Lombard invasion, together with the Greek cities of Naples, Gaeta, and Amalfi on the shores of the Mediterranean, which retained the institutions of municipalities and were enriched by the wealth their maritime position and active industry created, were gradually establishing their independence and becoming the types of the great Italian republics of the middle ages. These free cities, however, either from the force of old associations or the policy of attaching themselves to a weak and a distant power instead of submitting to a powerful and neighbouring master, still paid a nominal allegiance to the Greek emperor. In the case of Venice, indeed, the Latin writers vaunt of its complete subjugation by Pepin son of Charlemagne and titular king of Italy. But the Italians give a more correct account of the issue of his enterprise. They admit that Pepin gradually reduced all the islands, till the Venetians, driven to extremity, retired on the Rialto, which thenceforth became their citadel and seat of government. Having there concentrated their forces, they sallied forth and burnt the fleet of Pepin, which had grounded in the shallows of the Lagunes. This signal success and their unapproachable position left them afterwards nothing to fear for the maintenance of their independence. The Doges of Venice formed alliances with the Greek cities on the northern shore of the Adriatic, and laid the foundations of the dominion which they afterwards extended on that

coast. But here their position was more accessible, and Istria and Dalmatia were reckoned among the provinces of the empire connected with its Italian states.

The actual sovereignty of the Greek emperors in Italy in the ninth century was confined to an unimportant territory at its eastern extremity, where part of Apulia and Calabria with Bari for the capital, dignified after the extinction of the exarchate of Ravenna, with the empty title of the Theme of Lombardy, was all that remained of their dominions in the west. Indeed, though their Byzantine capital was seated on the hither side of the Bosphorus, and the barbarized provinces of Greece and Macedonia were subject to their rule, the emperors of Constantinople can scarcely be considered at this period as an European power. With so wide a field before us it is therefore happily needless that we should more than incidentally notice the political relations of the series of emperors who, with savage despotism or oriental apathy, filled the Byzantine throne between the Isaurian and the Macedonian dynasties. A frontier treaty with Charlemagne, another with the Caliphs of Spain for mutual cooperation against those of Bagdad, some pompous embassies to the Frankish kings, and the tardy and infrequent appearance of their fleets on the southern shores of Italy, were the slender tokens of the intervention of the Greek emperors in the affairs of western Europe.

Exterior to the great aggregation of kingdoms which composed the body of the Carlovingian empire, a vast zone almost equal in extent to the immediate territories af the Franks, peopled by nations mostly of Sclavonic origin, embraced its northern and eastern flanks. It extended from the Baltic to the gulf of Venice, and was backed again by still more savage and unknown tribes who wandered over the deserts of northern and eastern Europe ready in turn to pour their swarms on any frontier where the progress of civilization might advance—not to speak of the Scandinavian tribes, whose piratical descents on every coast will form a melancholy feature in the course of this enquiry, but whose history belongs to another division of the present work.

The victories of Charlemagne over the nations more immediately in contact with his hereditary dominions, the Saxons, the Moravians and the Bohemians, enabled him to extend the bounds

of his empire to the Oder, the Carpathian mountains, the Danube and the Theiss. But these warlike nations submitted impatiently to a foreign master. They became tributaries rather than subjects, and were waiting the opportunity which the decline of the empire speedily afforded them, of throwing off the yoke and asserting their national independence.

Such being a geographical sketch and a view of the relative positions of the dominions of the Franks in the last years of Charlemagne, it may easily be conceived that no arm less powerful, no mind less vigorous than his, could enforce the allegiance of so many peoples, differing in race, in customs, and in language, held together by no common interests, and over which the rights of sovereignty materially varied.

But viewing the empire in its integrity, it must not be supposed that under Charlemagne himself, with all the power of his arms and all the vigour of his administration, it presented the aspect of order and tranquillity which its traditions seem to convey.[1] Scarcely a year passed but Charlemagne was at the head of his armies, at one time to curb the barbarians on the Elbe, at another to chastise the insubordinate vassals of Brittany or Beneventum; now, to repel the incursions of the Sclaves on the Oder or the Danube, and again to secure or enlarge his Spanish frontier on the Ebro.

It is foreign to our purpose to consider the character of Charlemagne's legislative and administrative policy, except as it may be hereafter necessary to glance at its connection with the revolutions, the elements of which are to be discovered in the very foundation of the empire. The leading principles of his government were unity, the conservation and extension of the remains of Roman civilization, incessant conflict with barbarism within and without. He reformed, protected, and endowed the church; he made it his instrument and auxiliary; but he ruled it with a stern hand. The ascendancy of the bishops over the temporal power was deferred till the period from which we propose to take our next point of view;—that of the popes to a still later age. Charlemagne founded schools and encouraged learning—surrounding

(1) The chronicles of the times record Charlemagne's annual expeditions as part of his regular routine of action, with as much uniformity as they register his solemnization of the great feasts of the church and his hunting in the forests of the Vosges or the Ardennes.

himself with the most accomplished men of the age, when scholars were statesmen as well as philosophers.

It was from the abbies and schools of England and Ireland that Charlemagne and his successors drew some of the most able men who enjoyed his confidence and were employed in their wise measures for the diffusion of knowledge. We remark with satisfaction that the intellectual state of the British islands was then superior to that of the continent. Ireland, long illustrious for learning and sanctity, had found in her inaccessible position, security from the ravages of the successive hordes of barbarians, who nearly obliterated all remains of civilization in the continental states. In England the Saxon invaders soon settled down, and the establishments for study and science which Christianity introduced were not broken up till the great irruption of the Danes, and at the period of which we speak were quietly pursuing their labours. It was from York that Charlemagne invited Alcuin his chief counsellor and the principal instrument of his great designs for the improvement of his people; and Alcuin obtained from the Anglo-Saxon monasteries the greater part of the manuscripts, both of profane and sacred literature, which he caused to be copied and used in the schools of France and Germany.

The death of Charlemagne produced no immediate change in the imperial system. The impress which his genius had made on the face of European society was not quickly effaced, and we shall find its stronger lines distinctly visible during the reigns of two of the kings, who after his death occupied the imperial throne. The administrative forms were the same, when the spirit which animated them had departed. The great barbarian nations which he subjugated, though they frequently invaded the frontiers and ultimately succeeded in establishing national sovereignties, never again penetrated into the interior of the empire; learning was still encouraged, and the church was further reformed; and, amidst most of the divisions which followed, the struggle for unity was maintained, though the centre of power was afterwards transferred alternately from Germany to France.

It is probable also that the genius and example of Charlemagne were not without some influence on the fortunes of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom. Alcuin of York must have familiarized him

with its affairs; and he was in intimate relation with several of its kings.

There is extant a letter from Charlemagne to Offa king of Mercia, in which he promises to protect strangers and merchants in his dominions, and begs the prayers of the Anglo-Saxon king for the soul of his dear deceased friend pope Adrian.

Eginhard, his secretary and historian, informs us that Eardulf king of Northumberland, being expelled from his country, repaired to Charlemagne, who was then at Nimeguen, and returning with ambassadors from the emperor and the pope was restored to his kingdom by their influence. Egbert, also a banished man, was trained in the school and the camp of Charlemagne. Having held a high rank and been intrusted with important employments both civil and military in his service,[2] Egbert was raised to the throne of Wessex the year before Charlemagne consummated his great achievements by adding the *prestige* of the imperial dignity to his sovereign rights of birth or of conquest over the Roman populations of Italy, of Germany, and of Gaul. In the polished court of Charlemagne, and in the society of the accomplished and learned men that great prince drew around him, Egbert would have learnt the importance of promoting the civilization of his rude Anglo-Saxon subjects: while his design of uniting the Heptarchy shews with what a vigorous hand he carried out the leading feature in the policy of his illustrious friend.

Our own Alfred also, if we are not greatly mistaken, caught some of his inspiration from recollections which were still fresh in the memory of men, and in the traditions of his own family.[3] The impression may have been deepened by his residence at the

(2) As a count of the empire he appears to have been entrusted with the defence of the Saxon march against the incursions of the Danes across the Elbe, on the banks of which, between Hamburgh and the sea, Egbert founded the town and castle of Esselfelt. He was afterwards employed, with other commissioners, in negociating a treaty of peace with the Danish king, which was approved by Charlemagne.

(3) The difficulties in which the question of Alfred's relation to Judith is involved, have raised doubts as to the anthenticity of the anecdote which refers Alfred's first acquisition of letters to the teaching of his mother. The story of his permitting the cakes to burn on the hearth of the cottage at Athelney has been also doubted. For ourselves, we are unwilling to consign to the region of the fabulous, incidents which have an air of truth and nature and rest upon very respectable evidence. These stories have become "household words," inseparably connected with the name of Alfred. Even literary scepticism, we are inclined to think, is sometimes carried too far.

court of Charles the Bald, and afterwards by intercourse with his step-mother Judith who was the daughter of that king. However this may be, the policy of Alfred was in many essential particulars identical with that of the great emperor. We find the same indomitable spirit of resistance to barbarian invaders; the same disposition to compromise, on terms of suzerainty, with powerful chiefs holding independent sections of territory; the same efforts for the civilization both of native subjects and of foreigners who had established themselves within or on the borders of their proper dominion, for the restoration of union and order, and the encouragement of learning; the same enlightened cooporation with the church. Alfred's sphere of action, indeed, was more circumscribed; but these volumes contain abundant evidence that in all the nobler qualities of the mind and heart,—unselfishness, patriotism, love of his people, deep religious feeling,—in all the moral virtues and in intellectual powers,— the Anglo-Saxon king was immeasurably superior to the Frank emperor.

On the death of Charlemagne, his only surviving son, Lewis,—*le Debonnaire* of the French, the *pius* of the Latin writers—inherited all his father's dominions, except Italy, which his elder brother Pepin had governed with the title of king, his son Bernard succeeding him on his death shortly before that of Charlemagne. The Italian people, ever impatient of the yoke of German domination, had encouraged the young prince, on the accession of the new emperor, to aspire at the establishment of a national and independent sovereignty; but the enterprise failing, Bernard was thrown into captivity and miserably perished under circumstances of cruelty which cast a stain on the character of his uncle; and though he was not directly culpable, caused him afterwards the deepest remorse and a most painful expiation.

All the dominions of Charlemagne were thus united under the sole government of Lewis; and the early years of his reign were otherwise prosperous. The insurrections of the tributary nations, who had flown to arms on the death of the late emperor, were speedily quelled. The integrity of the empire was secured, ambassadors from the Greek emperor and the caliph of Cordova offered their congratulations; and the mission of Anscaire into Sweden for the conversion of the pagans of Scandinavia, with the foundation of an episcopal see at Hamburgh, evinced the piety of

Lewis and extended his influence in the north of Europe. The imperial household was purified from the scandals which the lax morality of Charlemagne [4] had introduced. The reformations of the church, commenced by him, were enforced with a rigour of discipline long unknown, and, as Lewis inherited his father's love of letters, his court was frequented by learned men.

The people oppressed by Charlemagne found in his son an upright and lenient judge. "Thus," says an eloquent writer, "the inheritance of conquest and spoliations fell into the hands of a simple and just man; who chose at any cost to make reparation. The barbarians who recognised his sanctity, submitted their disputes to his arbitration. He sat on the judgment seat in the midst of his people, like an easy and confiding father. He went about repairing, comforting, restoring; and it appeared as if he would have willingly given away the whole empire in making reimbursement."

Lewis le Debonnaire was by no means wanting in either courage or military conduct, and in his early years he had successfully led the Frankish armies against the Saracens in Spain; but he was deficient in the sterner qualities necessary for holding the helm of the state with a firm hand in those unsettled times. It was his misfortune to reign under circumstances when a powerful genius seconded by an energetic character could hardly have arrested the developement of the germs of separation which were springing up on all sides. He had to combat two principles of dissolution which were entailed on the inheritance of Charlemagne, to reconcile the political unity and central government of the imperial monarchy with the forms of succession which were the custom of the Franks from the time of Clovis. The struggle was beyond his strength. His too facile disposition made him the tool of intriguing churchmen, the slave of turbulent nobles, and, worst of all, the victim of the ambition of his own unnatural sons.

Lewis's first and most fatal error was pregnant with all the disastrous consequences which, in the sequel of his own reign and during the remainder of the century, desolated Europe.

(4) Charlemagne had many concubines, and his daughters led very irregular lives.

Scarcely was he seated on the throne of the united kingdoms which composed the empire of Charlemagne, than, following the vicious precedent of the Frankish sovereigns, he associated his eldest son Lothaire in the title of emperor with the government of Italy, giving to his second son, Lewis the German, the kingdom of Bavaria; and to Pepin, his third son, the kingdom of Aquitaine. The suzerainty of the lesser kingdoms was reserved to Lothaire as the eldest brother and emperor, and the act of creation was accompanied with a solemn protest against its being construed into a dismemberment of the empire and by oaths of fidelity from Lewis and Pepin to Lothaire;—a protest which proved empty words,—oaths which were a solemn mockery.

Lewis's second marriage, shortly afterwards, with Judith, an accomplished but intriguing princess, was another imprudence; and the birth of a son by that union, called Charles the Bald, increased the complication of affairs. The customs of the age and the uxoriousness of a weak monarch concurred in requiring that this favourite son should also be invested with royal dignity; and as the appanage of the young prince was severed from the territories assigned to his brothers; fresh seeds of discord were planted in the family of Lewis.

Our slight sketch of the course of affairs at this period will only admit a rapid glance at the principal events and influences which foreshadowed and prepared the way for the great crisis in European affairs which was now imminent, and we are spared the task of following the page of history while it describes the calamities which the civil wars, fomented by the ambition, the rivalry, and the intrigues of the sons of Hermengarde, inflicted on Europe and on their too easy father during the closing years of his reign. But it is impossible not to pause for a moment before the tragic spectacle of the discrowned dishonored monarch seeking refuge from the insults of his people in the camp of his rebellious sons, his queen and child torn from his embraces, and a suppliant in vain, like another king Lear, to those on whom nature, duty and gratitude imposed the strongest obligations for reverence and honour.

The imprudence of the act which, in dividing, had utterly shattered the sovereign power, was only equalled by the weakness of

the abject humiliation with which the unhappy Lewis submitted himself to the judgment of the Frankish bishops assembled at Compiegne. His tender conscience touched with remorse for the involuntary share which he had taken in the murder of his nephew Bernard, he was the more disposed to plead guilty to the long list of political offences,—headed by that very serious charge,—on which he was arraigned. Condemned to a public penance, deposed from his sovereign rank and stripp'd of the ensigns of imperial dignity, Lewis was led to a convent, the asylum which the reverential spirit of that age, amidst all its barbarism, assigned to fallen royalty. In a more advanced state of society, revolutionary tribunals ventured to inflict a keener sentence—while exile appears to be the penalty with which modern civilization has learnt to be satisfied in dealing with the errors or malversation of kings.

The degradation of Lewis had made him an object of disgust to his barons and of contempt to his people. But the sad spectacle which had not touched the hearts of his sons soon roused the feelings of his subjects to the commiseration of fallen greatness.—The bishops were satisfied with his submission to their judgment; the ascendancy of the church had been signally exhibited; and in an assembly at Thionville they annulled the sentence of the emperor's degradation. Lewis was restored to his rank and to the exercise of his sovereign authority, but his spirit was broken and his career nearly ended.

The influence of Judith prevailed with him, in the first moments of his just indignation, to deprive Lothaire and Lewis, his son Pepin being now dead—of their dominions and to confer the whole on Charles. But still placable and forgiving, he was again reconciled with Lothaire, and a year before his death at the diet of Worms, he divided them between Lothaire and Charles, except Bavaria which was left to Lewis the German. On his death-bed he sent a crown and a sword to Lothaire, charging him to be faithful to Judith and Charles. Lewis he forgave though he was again in arms in consequence of the emperor's last disposition of his dominions; "But let him look to himself," he said, "who despising God's command has brought his father's grey hairs to the grave." The unity of the empire ceased with Lewis le Debonnaire. In the course of the century it was more than once

re-established for short intervals; but henceforth it was the shadow of a great name. The glory was departed.

The partition of his dominions made by the late emperor gave the eastern provinces beyond the Meuse, the Jura and the Rhone to his eldest son Lothaire already dignified with the title of emperor, and king of Italy; and the western kingdoms of Neustria and Aquitaine, with the rest of France (except Provence which as part of the kingdom of Burgundy belonged to Lothaire) to Charles the Bald. Lewis the German retained his original kingdom of Bavaria; while Pepin II, on the death of his father of that name—the third son of Lewis Debonnaire by Hermengarde—made pretensions to the kingdom of Aquitaine which his father had held.

The death of Lewis, in 840, was the signal for the renewal of the jealousies and animosities which had distracted his reign. The title of emperor appeared to confer on Lothaire the suzerainty of the crowns of Neustria and Bavaria, and inflated with magnificent ideas of his prerogative he assumed a tone of superiority which the kings Charles and Lewis were not disposed to brook. The attempt of Lothaire to resuscitate the empire was indeed a bootless enterprise. He had not only to resist the ambition of his two powerful brothers, but the spirit of the age was opposed to universal empire and becoming favourable to national monarchies; so that the instinct of the people coincided with the personal interests of the two kings, whose independence appeared incompatible with the existence of an empire. Nor was this all; for the difference of race was another element in the struggle which ensued. It may be viewed in some measure, as a contest between the two great races of the conquerors and the vanquished, of the Franks of Germany and Gaul against the Romans of Italy, and the Roman-Gaulish population of the Narbonnese province and Aquitaine. They fought under the standards of the grandsons of Charlemagne, accepted as national kings, to overthrow the system which he founded, when by the establishment of an imperial throne he confounded all nationalities and centred all power in the chief of the conquering race.

In this great quarrel, involving such various principles and interests, Pepin II ranged himself on the side of the emperor; and the pope, as an Italian prince and the centre of a system

which aimed at universal dominion naturally favoured his pretensions. On the other hand, the great body of the bishops and clergy supported the cause of the kings. The faithful were scandalized by the endeavours of Lothaire to enlist the heathen Danes and Saxons, and Pepin the infidel Saracens of Spain, in the number of their adherents; while Charles was considered the creature and champion of the church.

The fate of Europe in 841 hung upon the event of the battle of Fontenay,[5] in which the royal brothers and nephews brought their unnatural quarrel to the issue of the sword, and Frank met Frank:—those of the Rhine against those of the Seine. The slaughter of brave and noble warriors was so great that, as the writers of the times lamented, the empire was left defenceless against the ravages of the barbarians; but the battle was indecisive, except so far as its results may have inclined the contending parties to listen to terms of peace, when, on their again meeting in arms the year following, the bishops interposed to stay the further effusion of blood. A tripartite division of the empire, agreed on between the three brothers Lothaire, Lewis and Charles—to the exclusion of their nephew Pepin—was carried into effect by the treaty of Verdun.[6]

843. This partition treaty deserves particular notice; for it laid down the main land-marks of the great European kingdoms as they continued to exist for a long course of years. The bases were taken from the statu-quo of the three princes in Lombardy, Bavaria and Neustria; and the remaining provinces of the empire were grouped round these several centres with some due regard to natural boundaries and national idiosyncrasies. Lothaire, the emperor, had Italy and all the country comprised within the Alps, the Rhine and the Scheld, together with the antient kingdoms of Burgundy, comprising the territories from the source of the Saone to its confluence with the Rhone and along the left bank of the Rhone to the sea. To Lewis of Bavaria was allotted all Germany beyond the Rhine, with the three cities of Worms, Spire, and Mayence on its left bank. Charles the Bald retained the countries situated between the Scheld, the Meuse, the Rhone, the Ebro, and the two seas. Thus each of the kings had in his lot part of

(5) Fontenai near Auxerre; not Fontenoy memorable for another great battle.

(6) An island of the Saone near Maçon in Burgundy.

the national territory of the Franks :—Lewis the German their original seats beyond the Rhine, Lothaire the Austrasian kingdom intermediate with Neustria, the key of their position in France, which fell to Charles the Bald.

This partition of the empire loosened the ties which held in subjection the barbarous nations on the northern and eastern frontiers. The Saxons, the Moravians, and the Bohemians were already in rebellion, struggling for their emancipation, which shortly gave new kingdoms to Europe. Meanwhile the Frank kings were dividing territories they could hardly call their own ; for the Northmen had penetrated into the heart of France, had taken Nantes and Bourdeaux, and burnt Rouen and the faubourgs of Paris ; the Saracens of Africa were besieging Rome, and the Beneventines, the Bretons and the Gascons were in arms for the assertion of their antient independence. The exigency of the times demanded that the royal brothers should act in concert, and two years after the peace of Verdun, they assembled in congress to consult on the means of securing their thrones against present and future dangers.

847. At the congress of Mersen, [7] which may be considered as the sequel to the partition treaty, the three brothers contracted for their mutual support against foreign and domestic enemies. They pledged themselves to respect the hereditary rights of the young princes their children, saving the supremacy of their uncles ; and in order to find some guarantee for the stability of their position in the interests and instincts of the populations of their respective states, it was stipulated that the vassals should be secured in their titles to the absolute proprietorship of their domains, and that justice should be administered to the freemen of their realms according to the antient laws of their several races ; to the aboriginal inhabitants by the Roman code which prevailed before the conquest ;—to the Franks by their own traditional customs.

The brothers Lewis and Charles met again two years afterwards at Kiersy-sur-Oise, and entered afresh, with significant ceremonies, into a family compact. Such treaties of alliance, accompanied by concessions to national rights, again renewed from time to time, having been contracted without sincerity and

(7) A palace on the Meuse near Maestricht.

infringed without scruple, their repetition only exhibits the weakness and the apprehensions of the Frankish kings—their doubts of the good faith of each other, and their fears of the powerful aristocracy which was on every side rising to independence. The judicious remark of Des Michels[8] on the frequent renewal of these compacts is applicable to all times: "L'on peut reconnaître que dans les circonstances où la tendence des choses est magnifestement contraire à la politique des gouvernemens, la fréquence des congrès n'est qu'une témoignage de l'impuissance des rois."[9]

The review of European affairs which has now been brought down to the close of the first half of the ninth century, would be incomplete without some brief reference to the great kingdom in the western peninsula, which, having been but incidentally connected with the history of the Frank empire, is reserved for a separate notice. We have seen that the only territories possessed by Christian powers in Spain were the mountainous district on the north, the cradle of the kings of Leon and Navarre, and the narrow angle of country lying between the Pyrenees and the Ebro—a *march* rather than a province—dependent on the kings and emperors of the Franks. With these exceptions, the Saracens possessed the whole of the peninsula, containing the present kingdoms of Spain and Portugal, and maintained the integrity of their empire during all the changes which affected the rest of the continent.

Not entering into the system and unmoved by the convulsions of central Europe, the Mosarabian kingdom of Spain for a lengthened period enjoyed internal tranquillity, and made advances in civilization and in material prosperity, which may well have been envied by its less fortunate Christian neighbours. Abdalrahman, its founder, who was contemporary with Charlemagne and the caliph Harun-al-Rashid, reigned with a lustre which even their renown did not eclipse. The last of the Ommadian princes of the east, he had escaped the massacre of his race by the rival sect and family of the Abassides, and was a fugitive among the Bedouins of Africa, when the sheiks and elders of the

(8) Des Michels, Histoire Generale du Moyen Age.

(9) "We have here an illustration of the principle that whenever the tendency of things is clearly contrary to the policy of a government, the frequency of congresses is only a proof of the weakness of kings." IBID.

Arabs in Spain, refusing allegiance to the new sultans of Bagdad, chose him for their sovereign. Landing on the coast of Andalusia, he was conducted in triumph by Granada and Seville to Cordova, a city so beautiful and attractive by its natural position that it well deserved the preference of the new caliph in selecting it for his residence and the capital of his government. Seated in the rich valley washed by the Guadalquiver, within a few miles of the lateral chain of the Sierra Morena, the sultry climate of Andalusia was tempered by the mountain breezes; while abundant waters were poured into the city for the irrigation of its luxuriant gardens and the service and refreshment of the inhabitants. Abdalrahman and his successors added all that art and magnificence could devise for the use and embellishment of their principal city, establishing at Cordova an independent caliphate which, taking its name from that capital, was continued in the family of the Ommiades for nearly three centuries.

The greatest part of the reign of Abdalrahman, and particularly the first years, were troubled by intestine factions and foreign invasions. The caliphs of Bagdad were not disposed to submit to a revolution which rent from the successors of Mahomet so fair a portion of their dominions, without strenuous efforts to reestablish their power in Spain. They fomented discontents among the emirs of the new caliph and the rival creed, and instigated the Moors of Africa to make a descent upon a territory of which ambition and sectarian fanaticism alike forbad the separation from the rule of the commander of the faithful. Scarcely had Abdalrahman defeated and expelled the Moslem invaders in the south, when an enemy still more powerful, of a more hostile creed, appeared on his northern borders.

History has preserved the names of the rebel emirs, traitors alike to their sovereign and their faith, Aben-al-Arabi, Abou-Taher, and Ben-Yousouf, who repaired to the court of Charlemagne and offered him their homage with the possession of the cities they governed on the frontier of Spain. Induced by their representations, Charlemagne assembled a great force composed of two corps d'armées, which crossing the Pyrenees in two divisions were led in person by the Frank monarch into the Spanish march. As his first operation was to reduce Pampeluna and rase its walls, there seems reason to believe, what the Arabian historians assert

and the great subsequent incident of the campaign appears to confirm, that the Navarrese, as well as the Gascons, were in alliance with the Saracens to resist an invasion which equally menaced the independence of all.

The chronicles give a very summary account of the expedition. They represent Charlemagne as receiving the submission of Barcelona, the chief city of those parts, and of the towns of Huesca and Girona; but whether subdued by force of arms or delivered up by their traitorous governors does not exactly appear. However, Charlemagne took hostages for their future allegiance, and, withdrawing his forces over the Pyrenees, was assaulted by the Gascons in his retreat at the pass of Roncesvalles. They threw his whole army into confusion, cutting off his rear guard to a man, including some of his most distinguished officers, among whom was Roland or Orlando, count of the Breton march.

The Frank writers gloss over this defeat as a mere desultory attack of guerilla mountaineers, who were indebted for their partial success to the nature of the ground and to an ambush in the thick forest which covered the flanks of the Pyrenees. They magnify the fruits of the expedition as having effected the subjugation of "all the cities of Spain," and they represent Charlemagne as returning conqueror of the Spaniards, the Gascons and the Navarrese; though at the same time they speak of his "misadventure," in terms which seem to indicate, in covert phrase, the extent of his chagrin at the disastrous issue of his expedition.

The Arabian historians declare that Charlemagne's army was defeated on its advance to the Ebro, and they agree with the romances of the middle ages in describing Mussulman and Christian, Asturian and Gascon, as mingling their ranks at Roncesvalles on that fatal day which the muse of Ariosto has rendered for ever illustrious. The truth seems to be that the army of the Franks was in full retreat when it was attacked in the passes of the Pyrenees; an alliance having been formed by all the powers of Spain, however differing in other respects, to resist and expel the intrusive king. The attack on his rear was the result of this combination, of the danger of which he had become sensible when he hastened his retreat; though the Frank chronicles attribute it to tidings he had received of the revolt of the Saxons under Witikind, demanding his immediate return.

At all events, if in his dreams of universal empire Charlemagne seriously meditated the conquest of Spain, this signal reverse must have served to dissipate the illusion. But one can hardly conceive that he would have proclaimed a *Champ de Mai*, and assembled two immense armies in France, merely to chastise the independent Gascons and Basques, and receive the submission already pledged, of some cities on the Ebro. Ten centuries afterwards, the great hero of that age, the victorious leader who claimed the succession and aspired to follow in the steps of the first emperor of the French, met his first reverses on the soil of Spain; the passes of the Pyrenees again witnessed the disasters of their retreating army, and, by a singular coincidence, it was from the plains of Saxony that the tidings came which recalled the imperial troops for the defence of the German frontier.

After the retreat of Charlemagne, the caliph of Cordova immediately regained possession of Barcelona and the other frontier towns, and the Spanish march remained as before debateable ground, the possession of which was always precarious and often nominal; the emirs or counts transferring their allegiance to the Christian or the infidel power, as their interests for the time dictated.

Relieved from the apprehension of foreign invasions, though rebellions and insurrections, which he was often in arms to quell, did not allow him to enjoy much repose, Abdalrahman found leisure to cultivate the more congenial arts of peace. The sciences flourished under his enlightened protection; for the caliph himself was an accomplished prince, and is celebrated for a soft and insinuating eloquence, and a delicate vein of poetry, specimens of which are still extant. He embellished Cordova with stately buildings, surrounding it with immense fortifications, the remains of which are still seen; and he laid the foundations of the great mosque, on the model of that of Damascus, which is now the Catholic cathedral; but which he did not live to finish. He died in 788, full of years and of honour; "principe prudente ed de mucho valor," as Mariana pithily sums up his character.

He was succeeded by his son Haschem who in the early part of his reign successfully encountered the Asturian Christians, and reviving the claims of the Visigoth kings of Spain to the province of

Septimania, crossed the Pyrenees and defeated with great slaughter the troops which the count of Toulouse had levied against him. Having burnt the faubourgs of Narbonne, he withdrew into Spain, dragging into slavery a vast crowd of prisoners, and loaded with booty. The fruits of this expedition supplied him with the means of completing the great mosque at Cordova which had been begun by Abdalrahman. The roof of this magnificent building was supported by 1500 columns of marble; 24 gates of bronze, the principal of which was plated with solid gold, admitted the faithful; and when at solemn festivals their devotions were prolonged into the watches of the night, 6000 lamps fed with fragrant oils shed a sweet perfume and a soft radiance over its vast area. The Catholic worshipper may still trace verses of the Koran inscribed on the walls, attesting the creed for which it was founded. He may shudder as they remind him of the infidel who for so many centuries held possession of his noble land, but in the lapse of a thousand years he may probably fail to remember the benefits which the supremacy of the Moslems conferred on Spain.

Other magnificent buildings, a library, palaces, new streets, the noble bridge of twenty-seven arches over the Guadalquiver, repaired or reconstructed, made Cordova the most splendid of the European cities of that age. During the peaceful reign of Haschem, the other towns of Spain received similar embellishments, mosques were built and schools founded; industry was encouraged; and following the wise and equitable administration of his fathers, justice was equally rendered, without distinction of creed, to Christians and Mahometans, the former of whom were conciliated by toleration in the free exercise of their religion.

During the troubled reign of El-Hakem, son of Haschem, the caliph's cruel and arrogant temper, wars on the frontier and the insurrections of rebellious emirs, interrupted for a while the tranquillity, and checked the rising prosperity, of the Saracen empire in Spain. It was during his reign that Lewis le Debonnaire led his father's troops against the infidels on the Spanish frontier, a sort of crusade congenial to his pious temperament. He conducted it with spirit and success, Barcelona being taken and its governor sent in chains to Aix-la-chapelle; and the supremacy of the Franks was for a time reestablished in the Spanish march.

But these advantages were short-lived, and the clouds which hung over Spain during the reign of Al-Hakem were dispelled when his son Abdalrahman the Second, a prince worthy of that great name, succeeded to the caliphate. He was received with acclamations by the people, whose confidence he had gained by the part he had taken in affairs during the misrule of his father Al-Hakem. The early part of the reign of Abdalrahman II was nearly cotemporaneous with that of Lewis le Debonnaire, but its aspect was widely different. A consummate general, as well as a wise and skilful politician, he recovered the losses which had been sustained on the frontier of the Ebro, retook Barcelona, and reestablished the ascendancy of the Saracens in the Spanish march. The incursions of the Christian princes of the Asturias and Navarre were restrained, and the Northmen, expelled from the coast of Lusitania, never succeeded in gaining a footing in Spain. Musa, the most formidable of the rebellious emirs, was reduced by the vigour of his arms, and Abdalrahman justly deserved the proud title of *El-Mouzaffer*, the "Victorious", by which he is known in the Arabian histories of Spain.

But higher still is the glory which is attached to his name as the patron of science and the arts, and the promoter of every thing which could conduce to the improvement, the happiness, and the prosperity of his subjects. Poets and philosophers flocked to his court to do him honour, and lent their aid in diffusing the love of science and the arts among the Arabs of Spain. All the time he could spare from state affairs was devoted to conversation with the enlightened men who were admitted to his familiar intercourse. Music lent her aid, the marble halls and voluptuous gardens of the caliph and his nobles echoed with melody, romance and song; and they formed the recreation of an imaginative people on the delicious banks of the Guadalquiver, the Guadiana, and the Tagus. Literature in all its branches, history, poetry, philosophy, unfolded the treasures of the past and occupied itself in preparing new offerings for future ages. Astronomy, child of the east, was transplanted to a still congenial climate; chemistry and medicine revealed their secrets and saw a new school founded in the west; and the acute genius of the Arabs cultivated with success the abstruser sciences.

Great indeed was the advance of the Arabs in every branch of

intellectual science and every form of industrial art. That original and picturesque architecture, distinct alike from classic and Gothic models, the remains of which still attract and delight the traveller, embellished the cities of Spain. Colonies from Africa and Asia introduced the Nabathæan cultures, and to them she is indebted for the palm, the mulberry and the sugarcane, as well as for the system of irrigation taught by the Moors, which with the mechanical contrivances for raising water above its natural level, converted the arid slopes of the Sierras into luxuriant gardens and fruitful vineyards. The mines of gold and silver, for which Spain had long been celebrated, were successfully worked; pearl and coral fisheries were established on the coasts; and every industrial process which could invite the labours of an intelligent people and the encouragement of an enlightened government, was diligently pursued. Under such circumstances,—with an impregnable frontier, exemption from foreign wars, civilization advancing and order and tranquillity maintained by the firm administration of a line of wise and prudent sovereigns—the Arabian kingdom in Spain was in the middle of the ninth century the richest and most populous of European countries.[10]

At the outset of our present undertaking, a summary glance on the course of affairs during the ninth century suggested certain marked epochs, corresponding with its natural divisions—and each of them distinguished by different phases of the political phœnomena,—as convenient points for our departure, for an intermediate rest, and for the final term of the enquiry. Two of them, fixed at the middle and the close of the century, had the further advantage of being nearly coincident with the dates of the birth and death of Alfred.

Our first point of view, taken from the beginning of the century, exhibited the empire of the Franks, under Charlemagne, at the zenith of his power, in all its extent and integrity. Following the course of events during the reign of his successor Lewis le Debonnair, we have seen the sovereign power completely shat-

(10) Mariana, Istoria. Cardonne Histoire de l'Afrique et de l'Espagne sous la domination des Arabes.

tered, and the unity of the empire become nearly nominal. It expired with him; and the results of the battle of Fontenay, with the treaties of the sons of Lewis for the partition of his dominions and for a mutual concert which vainly aimed to supply the place of the unity they had dissolved, have brought us to the close of the first half of the century.

From thence taking our second general point of view, we find the empire of Charlemagne divided into three great kingdoms, with still inherent and growing tendencies to further dissolution, which will be developed in its progress to the final dismemberment with which the century closed, and which is the term of our present essay.

As however two important European kingdoms, branches of the former western empire, did not enter into the system of Charlemagne and his successors, they found no place in our review of events and influences connected with the Carlovingian empire. Of these two independent states, the Saracen caliphate in Spain was therefore reserved for a separate notice; while of the state of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom in Britain at this period, the "Harmony of the Chronicles" and other portions of the present volumes will furnish ample and authentic records.

But it must be also remembered that at the time to which our survey of European affairs is now brought, Alfred the Anglo-Saxon king comes,—so to speak, upon the stage of history; and though, as we have already remarked, his relations with the continental states were but slight, it cannot be supposed that a prince of his enlightened character was an unobservant spectator of events which were changing the face of Europe. The expedition he sent forth to penetrate into the far East, and his own notes on the voyage of Othere [1] into unknown regions towards the North-pole, bespeak an extended range of observation which could not have overlooked the revolutions of neighbouring states. Alfred must have retained some personal recollections of European courts, and in his earlier years was connected with the family

(1) Industry and civilization must have made some progress in these early times in the Scandinavian peninsula, for Othere speaks of a herd of 600 tame rein-deer. Travellers who at this day find such herds depasturing on the higher Fjelds, and wonder how they have been reclaimed, may learn that a thousand years ago tame deer were used as decoys.

of Charles the Bald through Judith his step-mother, a daughter of that prince. She afterwards married Baldwin the powerful count of Flanders and her relationship with Alfred was renewed by the marriage of Baldwin II her son with Elfrida, Alfred's daughter. It may be observed, in passing, that in these alliances may be traced the first connexion,—afterwards so intimate both politically and commercially,—between the English and the industrious Flemings, who were already rising to wealth and importance under the prosperous reigns of Baldwin and his successors, counts of Flanders.

It has been not unreasonably supposed that Alfred himself furnished supplies of historical matter for the Saxon chronicle, that exact record of national occurrences which also contains frequent notice of important events in the Frankish kingdoms, and in some instances gives details which show an intimate acquaintance with political influences beyond the mere record of exterior events. At any rate we cannot suppose Alfred to have been less informed than the annalist of his own reign and country, as to what was passing in the rest of Europe. We have no exact means of knowing how the communication between the two sides of the channel was maintained; but we have abundant evidence in the continental collections how wide was the correspondence maintained between enlightened men of different countries during that period of great intellectual movement as well as of vast political changes. There were also frequent journies undertaken by churchmen and other members of the Anglo-Saxon community to Rome, the centre of all intrigues, the resort of all nations.

Scarcely a year passed that Alfred did not send messengers of high rank to the holy see with offerings of devotion and expressions of respect for the person of the reigning pope, receiving in return marks of the esteem and consideration in which he was held. Queen Ethelswith his sister died and was buried at Pavia in her way to Rome in 888, a year memorable for the dismemberment of the empire and its division into a number of independent kingdoms: of which one of those accurate entries in the Anglo-Saxon chronicle just referred to gives a very particular account. We feel justified therefore in assuming—and it is not an uninteresting thought to accompany us in following the course of events

during the remainder of the century—that while Alfred with singleness of heart was consolidating the security and order of his own sea-girt dominions, he watched with interest those ceaseless changes and divisions which the faithless policy and the restless ambition of his brother kings, and the animosities of their imperfectly amalgamated peoples, combined to effect in the distribution of territory and power on the continent of Europe during his own more fortunate career.

Neither the equitable partition of the empire made pursuant to the treaty of Verdun nor the family compact of Mersen, again and again renewed, succeeded in establishing the peace of Europe. It was still the theatre of conflicting interests; and pressed on the east by tribes of the Sclavonian race, on the shores of the channel by the invading Northmen, and on the south by the Saracens of Africa and Spain, it was impossible that society in any country should become settled and regulated. Each of the Frank kings was harassed in turn by intestine disturbances and frontier irruptions—and, as there was no real union and mutual cooperation, each was left to fight his own battle.

In the division of the empire, the claims of the younger Pepin to the kingdom of Aquitaine had been set aside in favour of his uncle Charles the Bald. But Pepin was at no loss to find adherents among the turbulent barons of his father's territories; and, unscrupulous in his alliances, the infidel Saracens of Spain and the pagan Northmen were arrayed under his banners with the hardy Britons of the duke Noménoé and the troops of Sancho king of Navarre, and of the powerful dukes and counts of Toulouse and Barcelona, all ready to assist in the dismemberment of the empire. Alternately restored and expelled, a king and a fugitive, escaping from the monastery in which he had been immured, and the tonsure, it was supposed, had sealed his political death, the young pretender's spirit and enterprise enabled him for several years to maintain an unequal contest and embroil the very heart of his uncle's dominions in his repeated attempts to assert his rights.

In Italy, another young prince of the blood of Charlemagne, Louis, eldest son of the emperor Lothaire, exhibited equal spirit, attended with greater success, in defence of the imperial rights

and the kingdom of which he had received the investiture from his father Lothaire. He chastised the seditious populace of Rome for electing a pope without the emperor's participation: struggled with vigour to reduce to submission the powerful and almost independent duke of Beneventum; and harassed the Moorish pirates of Africa who had penetrated as far as Rome, burnt the suburbs, and carried off the sacred vessels from the shrine of the apostles. Formidable in their flight as in their advance, they fought the Franks before they reached their ships, and the booty of Rome perished in the shipwreck of their fleet.

But the capital of Christendom owed its salvation as much to the heroism of the pope Leo IV, as to the valour of the imperial troops. Born a Roman, the courage of the first ages of the republic glowed in his bosom. He repaired the walls and armed and animated the citizens for their defence. The splendid and useful reign of Leo IV is rendered particularly memorable by his having surrounded with walls the quarter of the Vatican, which was formed by the strangers who gradually settled about the tombs of the apostles and afterwards called the Leonine city. A pope of such distinguished merit was worthy of being the spiritual father of Alfred the Anglo-Saxon king, who when a child was sent to Rome attended by an honourable escort, and having been received by Leo as his adopted son in the rite of confirmation was also consecrated and anointed king, and sent back, we are told, to his country, with the blessing of St Peter the apostle.

855. Two years[2] afterwards we find the young prince again at Rome, in company with his father Ethelwulf, who loved him, as we are informed, more than his other sons, and treating him with this distinction and causing him to be consecrated king at so early an age—seems to have given an augury of his future preeminence. Ethelwulf and the young prince, attended by a splendid retinue of Anglo-Saxon nobles, in passing through France, were hospitably entertained by the wise and accomplished Grimbald; and the king Charles the Bald, receiving them with

(2) A passage inserted in a later edition of the Saxon Chronicle and given in the "Harmony," p. 18, suggest a doubt whether Alfred did not remain at Rome during this interval, or even till after the death of Ethelwulf. This version would remove some difficulties, but it is at variance with all the other authorities.

honour, caused them to be conducted through his dominions with every respectful attention. Ethelwulf bore rich presents to the shrines of the apostles, and was received with the distinction which his piety and munificence demanded. The royal pilgrims spent a whole year at Rome, diligently occupied in prayers and alms-deeds. Nor was the Anglo-Saxon king unmindful of the interests of his people; for he rebuilt the English college or school founded by king Ina, which had been destroyed by fire some years before and for which Alfred, not unmindful, obtained some immunities in after times. Ethelwulf also, observing the penitents and exiles degraded by wearing in publics fetter of iron, procured a decree that no Englishman should undergo that indignity.

It was an eventful year that the English princes spent at Rome. Leo IV died in the month of July or August, and Alfred may have arrived in time to receive the last blessing of the aged pontiff who two years before adopted him as his son in confirmation, and gave him the kingly title and unction. It is not improbable that the penetrating mind of Leo had detected the germs of premature thought and intellect in the Anglo-Saxon prince, for whom he appears to have conceived a sincere regard. Whether Alfred arrived in time to receive the blessing or knelt over the newly closed tomb of his illustrious friend,—young as he was, he could not have passed through such scenes unmoved. And then followed the election and inauguration of the new pope, attended with all that magnificent and stately ceremonial, borrowed from antient usages, with which Rome has always dignified her solemn offices. The presence of the Anglo-Saxon princes gave additional splendour to the gorgeous pageant. Nor were scenes of a different character wanting. The displeasure of the emperors Lothaire and Lewis at the election of Benedict [3] having

(3) Benedict IV was consecrated in the month of September. It is a curious circumstance that king Alfred was at Rome at the very time, which is commonly assigned for the election of the female pope, who, known as Pope Joan, is said to have filled the papal chair on the death of Leo IV,—a scandal, if such it be, not invented by protestants, for the story was current in the Roman church long before the reformation. It has all the character of a romance, and is evidently one of those monkish legends which composed the popular reading of the middle ages. The heroine of the tale was of English extraction, and her love—as in modern fictions, that essential element was not wanting—for a young monk, also a countryman of Alfred's, gives interest to the first scenes of the drama. Her elopement in male attire and admission as a monk into the monastery of Fulda, the escape of the guilty couple, their journeyings to Athens and to Rome,—the poignancy of her grief at the loss of

been made without the imperial sanction occasioned the nomination of a rival pope, who was supported by a faction of the populace with all that violent turbulence for which the people of Rome were distinguished. Benedict was obliged to flee, after personal ill-treatment, from the fury of the faction; but the firmness of the bishops prevailed, and his return in triumph restored tranquillity.

It was an eventful year; the emperor as well as the pope was numbered with the dead during the pilgrimage of the royal Anglo-Saxons. Feeling that his death was approaching, the conscience of Lothaire became alarmed at a retrospect of the enormous crimes of which he had been guilty—perjury, murder and well nigh parricide. He retired to the monastery of Pruim, and, assuming the habit of a monk, waited with trembling apprehension the approach of the king of terrors. The horrors of his death-bed appalled the brotherhood. The monks relate the contest between the good and evil angels for his departing soul; but declare that their prayers prevailed.[4] In his son Lewis, the new emperor, fourth of his family, the Romans hailed their saviour and defender, and Alfred may have been admitted to familiar intercourse with a prince in many respects worthy of his imitation. The valour and patriotism of Lewis endeared their king to the people of Italy, and his death, after a long reign, left them a prey to the factions and wars which attend a disputed inheritance.

Whatever interest Alfred may have taken in the scenes accompanying the political occurrences which took place during his residence at Rome, there can be no doubt but his opening mind

her lover, and the sanctity arising from her profound melancholy, which, joined to her reputation for learning, paved the way for her subsequent elevation—all betray the real character of the story. Nor were there wanting touches of that coarse humour which we find in the carvings and "illustrations" of the age. What can be more ludicrous than the story of the "perforated chair" which forms the episode of the tale,—invented probably from an antient sedile of marble, used in bathing, some treasure of art from the ruins of the baths of Hadrian or Dioclesian, being made use of in the inauguration of the popes —and the scene to which it gave rise? "Mas est," cried the deacon to the solemn assembly. "Deo gratias!" responded the bishops and clergy.

(4) Chronicle of Father Richard. In Chron. Sithiensi Sti Bertini, the contest is described more graphically; "ita ut circumstantibus corpus ejus trahi et detrahi videretur; sed monachis orantibus, dæmones sunt fatigati." This was written in the 14th century: the "pull monk, pull devil," is an instance of additional embellishment, several centuries afterwards, not uncommon in such records.

must have been powerfully affected by the display of the choicest and most perfect productions of skill and industry which either the eastern or western world could offer, assembled in the capital of Christendom, as well as by the monuments of antient art which surrounded him on every side. The great object of interest and devotion to the pilgrims of those days were the tombs of the apostles St Peter and St Paul on the Vatican hill, without the antient walls of Rome, but round which Leo IV had just drawn a line of defence. Those consecrated shrines were not yet spanned by the wondrous dome raised over them by the genius of Buonarotti, but the traveller of our days may follow the footsteps of the Saxon princes to many a basilica which after the lapse of a thousand years retains the primitive form and the antient structure of the first ages of the church. One edifice, in particular, the devotion of which to sacred uses was then comparatively recent, could not fail of being visited with peculiar interest, as even now it attracts the notice of every thoughtful pilgrim from our northern isle. We speak of the house of Gregory the Great, the residence of the Anician family, converted by himself into a church and monastery, where the hall in which he daily fed the indigent, and other relics of his piety and munificence, are still shewn;—of Gregory the spiritual father of a long line of Anglo-Saxon princes and like Leo IV, whose memory was yet fresh, the saviour of Rome from barbarian spoliation.

If turning from the Christian antiquities we follow the footsteps of Alfred among the purer remains of antient art, the temples, the amphitheatres, the triumphal arches, which have survived the casualties of so many revolutions, we may easily believe that many a precious relic which disappeared during the intestine tumults of Rome in the middle ages, or was worked up in the construction of the fortified palaces of her turbulent nobles, met the wondering eyes of the young Anglo-Saxon prince, erect in all its original beauty and grandeur.

Was Alfred fully impressed with the interest attending these imperishable records of past times? did he associate with them the former glories of the masters of the world? Perhaps not: of mere book-learning we are informed he was ignorant for several years afterwards, but we are of the number of those who think

hat its value may be much over-rated, and that nothing more ends to expand the youthful mind than familiar association with ersons of superior intelligence and the opportunities for observaion which travel, and particularly foreign travel, affords. These he young Alfred fully enjoyed, and among other instances of arly developement which the records of the times afford us, we re not willing to believe that having these opportunities,—with reat natural abilities, and the noble spirit already moving within im,—Alfred wandered in ignorance among the striking remains f antient grandeur, while neither the learned Grimbald nor he enlightened men of the courts of Charles the Bald and Leo he Fourth, nor any of his compatriots in the Anglo-Saxon school t Rome, took the pains of informing his young mind and satisfying his curiosity respecting the mighty race whose history was connected with the relics of the past to which he was twice conducted. One thing we do know,—that when in after years he addressed himself to the task of instructing his unlettered subjects, the remains of Roman civilization were the fountains to which he had recourse, and it is easy to conceive from what recollections he drew the inspiration.

We leave Ethelwulf and Alfred to spend the year at Rome while we turn to what was passing in other parts of the empire. Lothaire, violating even in his death-bed repentance a solemn constitutional law which had decreed in a national assembly that there should be no further sub-division of the imperial dominions, divided his states between his three sons. He bequeathed to Lewis the eldest, already associated in the title of emperor, the kingdom of Italy. To his second son Lothaire, he gave the provinces between the Rhine and the Alps,—the Cis-Rhenane Austrasia, henceforth called from him Lotharingia or Lorraine. To Charles his youngest son were allotted the provinces on the Rhone, part of the antient kingdom of Burgundy, in right of which he assumed the title of king of Provence. Two new kingdoms were thus added to the three into which the empire was divided by the partition treaty of Verdun, and new elements of strife were introduced among the posterity of Charlemagne.

In France a faction of the Aquitanians, the people between the Seine and the Loire, who appear more than any other of the popu-

lation of Gaul to have been impatient of regular government and given to change, had invited Lewis the German, to accept the crown of Aquitaine, but that prince was too much occupied in defending his frontier against the Bohemians and Moravians to listen at present to their offer. The pretender Pepin had been expelled, and tendering their allegiance to Charles the Bald, to whom the kingdom had been allotted in the division of the empire, the counts and nobles of Aquitaine requested him to give them his young son Charles for king, but "despising his youth," they soon repented their choice, and Pepin was restored. The disaffection was not confined to Aquitaine but throughout the whole of France the counts, becoming every day more powerful and independent, were continually in a state of insubordination. To add to the misery and anarchy of the kingdom; the Northmen, no longer satisfied with their annual piracies on the coasts, were penetrating, by the Loire and the Seine, into the interior of the country, occupying Rouen and Orleans, and carrying fire and sword through whole districts. No one felt himself secure from their ravages, and from the weakness of the government and the want of concert between the king and his nobles, there was no organization which could make head against the invaders.

Ethelwulf returning from Rome in the autumn of 856 claimed the hand of Judith the daughter of Charles the Bald which had been already promised him. In his future step-mother—who was of years scarcely marriageable—and her brother Charles, the boy-king of Aquitaine who had now returned from his mockery of a government in that turbulent province, Alfred must have found congenial associates. The court of Charles the Bald, notwithstanding the troubles of the times, was distinguished for the enlightened men which the patronage of Charles drew round him, and the school of the palace in which the royal children were educated was illustrious for the ardour with which learning and science were cultivated. Judith herself to great personal charms, added attainments far beyond the usual range of small accomplishments. Captivated by her wit and beauty, the aged and pious Ethelwulf was probably led to commit a great imprudence, to say the least, in contracting so unseemly and disproportioned an union, for Judith was now scarcely thirteen years old. Her future career was far from creditable, and she seems to have inherited

not only the talent and the grace, but other very questionable ingredients in the character of her namesake and grandmother the empress Judith, wife of Lewis le Debonnaire.

We are however inclined to think that whatever difficulties may lie in the way of admitting the commonly received opinion which assigns to Judith the first important steps in the education of Alfred,—and however her tender years may have incapacitated her for performing the more serious duties of a step-mother towards a youth but little younger than herself,—the connection was highly favourable to the developement of the intellectual character of the young prince. Their relations from the first must have very much resembled those of brother and sister; and, sad to say, such soon became, on the death of Ethelwulf, their actual position. The influence of an accomplished elder sister, in all the free intercourse to which their near relationship gave occasion, on the opening mind of Alfred must have been great; while to Judith, transplanted from the most polished court and enlightened school in Europe to the ungenial atmosphere of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom and the society of its uncivilized nobles, the companionship of Alfred, fresh from the vivid impressions of foreign travel, must have proved a source of reciprocal satisfaction and have drawn forth all her stores of information.

However this may be, the nuptials of Ethelwulf and Judith were celebrated at the palace of Verberie with a magnificence which little indicated the perplexities of a tottering government and a realm's decay. In Hincmar the archbishop of Rheims, who gave the nuptial benediction, the youthful Alfred saw the greatest statesman, the most powerful subject, and the most enlightened, if not the profoundest, scholar, of the age. The ritual, composed for the occasion, is still extant, and its pure, majestic and solemn tone is worthy of the best ages of the Church. The fondness of Ethelwulf for his beautiful bride, or the pretensions of the Frank court, required that, contrary to the usages of the kingdom of Wessex, Judith should be received as queen as well as wife, and, anointed and crowned by Hincmar, she took her place on the throne by the side of her royal husband.

Returning to his own country, the Anglo-Saxon nobles and people, devotedly attached to Ethelwulf, acquiesced in the unusual

arrangement and received Judith as their queen. Their arrival served at once to dissolve the traitorous conspiracy which his eldest son Ethelbald had formed against his authority during his absence. But the clemency of Ethelwolf and the wise policy of his nobles allotted to Ethelbald the western part of his father's dominions in order to prevent the irremediable evil of a son warring against his father, or rather "of the whole nation carrying on civil war, either on the one side or the other."[1] The German customs, common alike to the Franks and the Anglo-Saxons, justified this partition, but we hear of no further attempts at usurpation, or family divisions, among the Anglo-Saxon princes; and it was to the union of the three brothers after the death of Ethelwulf, and more especially to Alfred's magnanimous postponement of his own pretensions and Ethelred's ultimate good faith, that their country owed its power of resisting with so much determination the invasions of the Danes.

On the contrary, it is to the total want of moral principle in the Frank princes, their unnatural animosities and disregard of the most solemn treaties and family compacts,—intrigues renewed on every fresh succession,—that we may attribute, above all other causes, the decay of the sovereign power, and the final disruption of the European commonwealth. This fatal propensity appears to have run in the blood of the descendants of Charlemagne: each of them not only conceived himself intitled by birth to be a king, but was ready to grasp, as opportunity offered, at every addition of territory which his ambition prompted, no matter by what means, or at whose expence: and unfortunately the feelings and the interests of the people of the several European states but too well seconded the projects of the princes.

The dissensions among the sons of Lewis le Debonnaire which broke up the empire into three great kingdoms were renewed on a lesser scale upon the death of the emperor Lothaire, and the subdivision of his third share between his sons Lewis, Lothaire and Charles. Their squabbles, their reconciliation, and the adjustment of their claims demand no further notice in a dissertation such as this. They are of less importance, as the two new kingdoms of Lorraine and Provence were very shortly absorbed, on the death of the

(1) Asser; in the Harmony &c. p. 20 of this volume.

young kings Lothaire and Charles without issue, in the greater kingdoms. But, here again, the grasping ambition of the princes of the house of Charlemagne was eminently exhibited; for, instead of being reunited in the person of Lewis, the natural heir to the third portion of the empire from which they had been severed, those kingdoms were now divided between his uncles, Lewis the German and Charles the Bald.

Nor did these two more powerful princes, though they acted in concert in this spoliation, respect the integrity of their own several dominions as established by the treaty of Verdun. It has been already mentioned that the rebellious Aquitanians had offered to transfer their allegiance from Charles to Lewis; but the latter, occupied by his wars against the Sclaves, had hitherto been only able, in compliance with those overtures, to send his son Lewis into Aquitaine where he made no permanent impression. Lewis the German, however, watched his opportunity, and while Charles the Bald was embarrassed by the incursions of the Northmen, he led his German Franks across the Rhine, and was joined by the rebellious counts of Neustria, Aquitaine and Brittany. Charles unable to face such a formidable combination, though he assembled some forces and the armies of the two brothers were in presence near Brienne, was compelled to flee, and Lewis possessed himself of nearly the whole of his dominions, rewarding his adherents by the distribution of abbies and royal domains.

But the power which had interposed between the brothers in arms after the battle of Fontenay, and proposed or dictated terms for the great settlement of European affairs which was carried into effect by the treaty of Verdun, again interfered. The bishops assembled in the council of Metz, deputed three of their number, in 859, to threaten Lewis with the censures of the church for the crime of which he had been guilty in invading his brother's kingdom and exposing it to the ravages of his army. Lewis submitted to the judgment of the bishops, humbly "begging" that, if in any thing he had offended them, they would be good enough to pardon him, so that he might proceed to speak in safety with them. Their threats and remonstrances preserved the kingdoms of Neustria and Aquitaine for Charles the Bald, who on his part acknowledged his abject dependence upon the bishops at the

council of Savonnieres held shortly afterwards to restore peace between the kings of the Franks. "After being elected by you," he said to the assembled Fathers, "and the other bishops and faithful nobles of the realm, and consecrated king according to the traditions of the church, I ought neither to have been dethroned nor supplanted without having been heard and judged by the bishops, by whose ministration I have been consecrated king, and who have been called the thrones of the Divinity. In them God sits, and through them he renders judgement. At all times I have shown myself ready to submit to their paternal corrections and castigatory judgments—and I am so now."

In the times of Lewis le Debonnaire we saw the bishops of Neustria sitting in judgement on the emperor, condemning him to a public and disgraceful penance, degrading him from his rank, and again restoring him to power, when it seemed fit to them. We have since seen them interfere on two memorable occasions to hold the balance between rival kings, and virtually dictate the terms on which their differences were adjusted. In short, we are alive to the fact of the complete ascendancy of the church at this period. But it must not be confounded with the domination of the papacy, the era of which had not just arrived, and to the growth of which it was opposed. Nor can the subject be dismissed with a sneer at the superstition of the age, and the encroaching and selfish spirit of the church. For any survey of the revolutions of the ninth century must be imperfect which does not convey some idea of the origin, the nature, and the influences on government and society, whether for good or evil, of the power which we have seen so signally exerted and have represented as so completely predominant.

We speak of the continental states; for circumstances were different in the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms where the clergy had not yet risen above their proper level. The bishops, indeed, had an influential voice in the national assemblies, and sat with the temporal magistrates in administering justice in the county courts. They were the counsellors of the sovereign, and were employed in important affairs of state. The clergy were already an estate of the realm. But the free institutions of the Anglo-Saxons were favourable to the maintenance of the balance of power, and all minds and interests were so absorbed in the one great object of

defending the country, that no class thought of trenching on the province of another. Nor were the personal characters of those who were at the head of affairs in church and state such as tended to disturb this equilibrium. The bishops were not intriguing or ambitious, and the kings did not expose themselves by their vices to the censures of the church. It may be said that Ethelwulf was in many respects the counterpart of Lewis the Pious; but Alfred and Edward the Elder were kings of too much energy of character to allow any scope for ecclesiastical ascendancy. It was not till the times of Odo and Dunstan and the feeble reigns of such kings as Edred and Edwy and Edward the Martyr, that the royal power in England was prostrated at the feet of the bishops, as it had been a century before in the other states of Europe.

It has been already remarked that, on the fall of the western empire, the Church was the only guardian of what remained of the Roman civilization. The bishops and clergy formed the link between the new barbarian sovereignty and the populations on which it was intruded. They attached themselves to the former for the restoration of unity and order; they used their influence for the protection of the latter, with which they were intimately connected, against the tyranny of their new masters who appropriated to themselves almost all the property, and would have arrogated all the authority in the conquered states, if brute force alone could have accomplished it. But knowledge is power; the clergy were the depositaries of whatever learning and intelligence had escaped the irruption of barbarism; the cities and towns which surrounded the cathedrals and greater abbies were the nurseries of industry and the arts, and the refuge of the better class of the free native populations which sought to escape the domination of the new lords of the soil. In these municipalities were preserved the memory, and in some sort the enjoyment, of those civil institutions which had secured to them a certain degree of freedom even under the despotism of the Roman emperors. As the senate and people of Rome had, under similar circumstances, sheltered themselves under the wings of the popes, investing them by their voluntary submission with an authority which was reflected back in benefits to themselves, so did these provincial municipalities find patrons and protectors in the bishops and supe-

rior clergy with whom they were locally connected. Every where the bishops became the representatives of whatever remained of nationality in the conquered territories. All other powers in the state were alien and intrusive.

But the native populations, when their subjugation had been effected by the sword, had to be governed by civil authority. They had retained the privilege of having justice administered to them after the forms and upon the principles of the Roman jurisprudence, instead of according to the barbarous and unwritten customs of their conquerors. This was another element of power in the clergy, among whom, almost exclusively, juridical science was cultivated. The general ignorance of the Frank nobles, and their contempt for every profession but that of arms, caused many of the functions of the magistracy, even as to police and civil causes, to be delegated to the bishops and clergy in their several jurisdictions; and the same causes drew the most eminent and intelligent members of the order round the person of the sovereign, as his counsellors and agents in all great affairs of state.

Their personal interests, withal, had not been neglected; for the Frank kings were profuse in grants to the bishops and abbots which placed them as to revenue and territorial influence upon a footing of equality with the counts and nobles. The enfranchisement of their villains, and the superior cultivation of their estates, made the churchmen the most popular, as well as the richest, members of the landed aristocracy.

In addition, then, to their spiritual authority—of which there is no need to speak—and to their influence as the natural representatives of the native populations, the bishops and superior clergy of those times acquired vast temporal power as enlightened statesmen and magistrates, as well as great proprietors.

The penetrating mind of Charlemagne had not failed to perceive the advantages to be derived from the cooperation of the church in his great designs for promoting the fusion the civilization and the well ordering of the heterogeneous populations of which his accumulated states were composed. During his reign there was the strictest alliance between church and state. But

while he invested the clergy with power and privilege, and enriched them with munificent endowments, he carefully retained the reins of power, and if there was any encroachment on their respective provinces, it was on the part of the emperor who without hesitation decided, *proprio motu*, on questions which belonged exclusively to the spiritual jurisdiction.

The intimate alliance between the two powers was maintained under the successors of Charlemagne: but with this difference, that in the decadence of the temporal sovereignty the church retained all the advantages she had received, rose more and more to the supremacy which the progress of events marked out for her, and instead of the handmaid, became the mistress of kings. While they were engaged in internecine wars, the counts were insubordinate, the peoples antagonistic, and kingdoms shattered, the church alone in her hierarchical constitution was the model of order and unity, and maintained with vigor her corporate and independent existence, when every other power was in a state of dissolution. The dissensions of the princes, the grand children of Charlemagne, raised her to the rank of arbiter in their quarrels; their perfidies and crimes enabled her to assume the attitude of their judge; and their impotence impelled them to have recourse to her as their patron and protector against the turbulence of their subjects. The government of the Frankish kingdoms, from the latter years of Lewis le Debonnair, was in fact an ecclesiastical aristocracy; though the bishops did not ostensibly exhibit their power except upon great occasions, when to rebuke or sit in judgment upon the misconduct of kings—however usurped an authority—was admitted to be their prerogative of divine right. In the ordinary administration of affairs, their part was that of counsellors and delegates of the sovereign, whose person and attributes were invested with all the respectful homage which the traditions of the church derived from their relations with the Christian emperors.

It has been intimated that the ascendancy of the clergy was not founded merely on a blind and ignorant superstition. There was enough of that doubtless, in the temper of the age, but the spiritual power never could have acquired the consistency it did, nor carried with it the concurrent assent of society, unless it had

been based on great moral principles and exercised for salutary purposes. The age was not arrived when mailed bishops were marshalled in the ranks of contending armies, and the vices of the clergy were a scandal to their order. The discipline of the church had been restored and was maintained with vigour. The schools of the monasteries were encouraged; architecture, music, agriculture, all the arts and processes of industry which had survived the barbarism of preceding centuries and were struggling against its new aggressions, found their refuge in the bosom of the Church and were mainly connected with its functions. All movement, moral and intellectual, was in the clergy, and a power thus usefully employed—which could rebuke the vices of kings, step in between them when armies were in presence, and cause them to sheath their fratricidal swords,—a power which was essentially national and was ready to maintain the independence and interests of national kingdoms,—could not fail of being respected.

We are accustomed to associate with the ambition of the clergy ideas of the narrow and scholastic range of their own attainments and the desire to stifle all free enquiry by others, which are not altogether applicable to the times of which we treat. The most eminent ecclesiastics were greatly indebted for their moral and social preeminence to their enlightened character as statesmen, taking large views and having great experience in political affairs. Even as churchmen, questions of faith and doctrine had become so complex and difficult, and rules of discipline and the relations of the church with civil society so extensive and complicated, that much general information and a great developement of mind were required in those who took part in the administration of affairs. Scarcely a year passed without ecclesiastical councils and synods, the debates of which sharpened the intellect and kept alive the intelligence which dealt both with spiritual and temporal affairs,—alike the subject of discussion and included in the decrees of those assemblies.

In the reign of Charles the Bald, about the period to which our review has now brought us, two great religious questions divided the opinions and called into exercise the keenest faculties of the theologians of France. One, proposed by Pascasius, abbot of Corbie, had reference to the nature and manner of the divine

presence in the Holy Eucharist. The other controversy, raised by Gotteschalk a German monk, involved the unfathomable questions of the divine prescience and the freedom of the human will. The subject belongs to the intellectual or literary rather than to the political history of the age, and we advert to it only for the purpose of remarking the free and extensive range of thought with which these intricate questions were canvassed. In the fierce encounter bishop was engaged against bishop, and council against council. John the Scot, an Irishman from the isle of saints, master of the school of the palace and the intimate friend of Charles the Bald, who was invited by Hincmar to defend the orthodox faith, in treating of these abstruse subjects boldly asserted the right of private judgment. Without directly attacking the popular belief, he advocated the claims of reason to inquire for itself, and gave the first impulse to the movement of intellectual liberty which, after a long struggle, succeeded in setting free the human mind from the shackles of an unreasoning and implicit submission to authority.

It is probable that John Erigena exceeded his commission; for Gotteschalk experienced harsh treatment at the hands of Hincmar. But it is as a statesman, rather than as a theologian, that we have to deal with the character of the greatest churchman of the age. Descended from a noble family of Aquitaine, the early part of Hinemar's life was divided between the court and the cloister; in both of which he displayed so much ability and discretion that Charles the Bald attached him to his interests and raised him in 845 to the archiepiscopal see of Rheims, the highest ecclesiastical dignity in his dominions. He had now full scope for the exercise of his great talents; indeed for the greater part of his public life, a period of nearly forty years, he may be said to have governed France, as well as to have exercised an important influence in the other European kingdoms, maintaining an extensive correspondence with all the most eminent persons of the age.

Haughty and imperious in temper, and possessed of high notions of the authority of the church, Hincmar does not appear, as far as we are able to gather from his correspondence and the other records of the times, to have formed any express design to lower the royal authority or to build upon its ruins the ascendancy of the church. The part he took seemed rather to have

been forced upon him by external circumstances; and his zeal was directed equally—as a faithful minister of the crown—to the promotion of Charles's interest both in foreign and domestic affairs, and the good government and defence of his dominions, and,—as a spiritual chief—to the maintenance of the liberties of the national church, of which he is esteemed the founder. These he strenuously asserted against all encroachments of kings on the one hand, and popes on the other; and the tendency of the age to the distribution of power and territory amongst an increasing number of independent communities, coincided with the efforts of Hincmar to maintain the rights of national churches and their bishops and metropolitans.

Though the supremacy of the popes was thus postponed, they did not suffer their pretensions to be altogether dormant; and the times of which we treat afford several memorable instances both of their success and of their failure, when they seized occasions to extend the rights of the holy see beyond the limits within which it had been hitherto confined. When the sons of Lewis le Debonnair were in arms against him, and pope Gregory IV, expousing their cause, came to their camp in Alsace, a report was spread that he intended to excommunicate the emperor and the bishops of France if they did not submit to his decision of the quarrel; but the bishops indignantly retorted that if the pontiff came to excommunicate, he should return excommunicated.[2] The pope prudently abandoned the cause of the rebellious princes, pretending that he came only to reconcile the father with the sons.

At a later period, to which our review of the course of events has now brought us, Lothaire king of Lorraine was excommunicated by Nicholas the First for repudiating his wife Theutberga, in order to live with Waldrade, whose near relations the archbishop of Cologne and the bishop of Treves had induced the council of Metz to sanction the divorce. But Nicholas cancelled the decree of the council, and separated the bishops from the communion of

(2) "Si excommunicans adveniret, excommunicatus abiret." Agobard archbishop of Lyons treats the subject of papal interference in firm and temperate language in his letter to the emperor Lewis De comparatione utriusque regiminis, ecclesiast. et politic. Si Gregorius papa irrationabiliter et ad pugnandum venit, et pugnatus et repulsus recedet: si pro quiete et pace populi, et vestra, laborans nititur, bene et rationabiliter obtemperandum est illi, non repugnandum." Letters of Agobard in Bouquet. Vol. VI, p. 366.

the church. Adrian his successor received at Monte Cassino the first of all the kings of Europe who crossed the Alps to implore pardon of the pope of Rome. Lothaire and Waldrade, throwing themselves at his feet, did penance for their crime, and were dismissed with threats of the vengeance of Heaven unless their repentance was sincere. The death of Lothaire within a week [869] was regarded as the just punishment of his insincerity.

His death furnished occasion for another papal interposition which was not equally successful. Lewis the German and Charles the Bald, as we have already seen, divided his dominions; Lewis usurped Transjuran Burgundy, while Charles was crowned king of Lorraine. Pope Adrian expoused the cause of the right heirs, and threatened to excommunicate Charles. It was upon this occasion that Hincmar addressed to the pope the two celebrated letters, in one of which he rebuked the pontiff for his interference in temporal affairs; and in the other maintained the royal prerogatives against the pretensions of the holy see in terms which singularly contrast with the submission which the bishops were exacting from their kings. He reconciles the seeming inconsistency by alleging that it is the kings, "who are constituted by God to command on earth, who have permitted the bishops to rule their affairs in accordance with their sovereign decrees." Adrian found it necessary to temporize, replying to the letters of Hincmar with fulsome compliments on Charles's justice and love of letters; and offering him the succession to the empire which he had no more right to confer than he had to interfere in the affairs of Lorraine.

While the Frank kings were intriguing to add new states to the dominions which they were unable to defend against foreign invaders, their nobles rebellious, and the people so harassed by the ravages of the Northmen, that they rose en masse, without leaders, to make an ineffectual effort for their expulsion from the banks of the Seine,—the Anglo-Saxon princes, acting in concert, and "rendering," as Simeon of Durham states, "brotherly help to each other," were making heroic efforts to drive the barbarians from their shores. The lion-hearted Alfred, with an unselfish devotion content to occupy a subordinate station, was ever in the foremost rank of his brother's armies, and a united people, confident in their chiefs, seconded all their efforts and

were ever ready to renew the contest in defence of their country and their religion.

The Franks were at least equal to the Anglo-Saxon people in courage and the use of arms, and the population of Neustria and Aquitaine must have been as numerous as that of Wessex and the other Anglian kingdoms south of the Humber. How then do we account for the difference in the vigour with which the contest was maintained on the two sides of the channel, and in the ultimate issue of the long protracted struggle? was it that the flower of the chivalry of the Franks perished in the fatal field of Fontenay, that fratricidal battle in which the slaughter on both sides was so great that, as the chroniclers lament, there were not warriors left to defend their common country? We are inclined to think that the accounts of the slaughter are exaggerated, and the lamentations for the result heightened by the terrors of the monkish annalists. Was it that the native populations of Gaul were not yet fused with the conquering race, and that their dubious fidelity to Frankish counts and lords did not warrant their training them to the use of arms and arraying them thus against the enemy, as would appear from the tumultuary movement recently mentioned? Was their zeal in the cause too weak to induce them to enter heartily into a combined struggle against the new race of invaders; or, was it that the government of the Frank kingdoms being in the hands of churchmen, exhortations and homilies took the place of muster-rolls,—the relics of the saints were carried to the front of battle instead of the standards of war,—and treasures of gold and silver were lavished in purchasing a disgraceful truce from barbarians who hardly respected treaties dictated at the point of the sword? All these circumstances may have contributed in various degrees to the different results of the war with the Northmen on the opposite sides of the channel. But we are inclined to think that the proximate cause of the success of the Anglo-Saxon kings and people, is to be found in the union of the princes with each other and with their subjects, and their unreserved devotion to the single object of repelling or reducing the invaders.

The return of Judith to her own country dissolved the only tie which connected the Anglo-Saxon with the Frank princes. The young widow of Ethelwulf had formed a revolting alliance with

his eldest son Ethelbald, between whom and Ethelbert their father's dominions were divided. On the death of Ethelbald, after a reign of only five years, she quitted for ever her adopted country, and selling, we are told, all her property, repaired to the court of her father Charles the Bald. Some interest attaches to a woman who it is supposed had a considerable share in forming the character of the young Alfred; and we find with regret that she speedily formed a shameful connection with Baldwin Bras-de-fer, a Flemish noble of distinguished ability, with whom by the help of her brother Lewis she eloped from the palace of Senlis where she was guarded and treated as a queen. In the first moments of his indignation at the dishonour done to his family, Charles the Bald invoked the censures of the Church on the guilty couple. They fled to Rome, expressed deep contrition for their fault, and by the mediation of the pope Nicholas I, Charles was induced to sanction their legitimate union. He gave to Baldwin all the country between the Scheld, the Sambre, and the sea, the antient territory of the Foresters, creating him count of Flanders, "that he might be the bulwark of the Frank kingdom against the Northmen." Baldwin built Bruges as a fortress to coerce their inroads. After a long and active life he left behind him the character that "Flanders never had a man his superior in talent and warlike ability," and we may hope that Judith wore the coronet of Flanders with more honour than her Anglo-Saxon crown. Her son Baldwin the second,—called, from his grandfather Charles Baldwin the Bald—succeeded as count of Flanders; and it is pleasant to find that the relationship of Judith with Alfred was renewed by the marriage of her son to Elfrida, daughter of Alfred; the germ perhaps, as we have already had occasion to remark, of the intimate and long continued connection between the Flemings and the English, the two nations which in the earliest times distinguished themselves by industrial and commercial progress.[3]

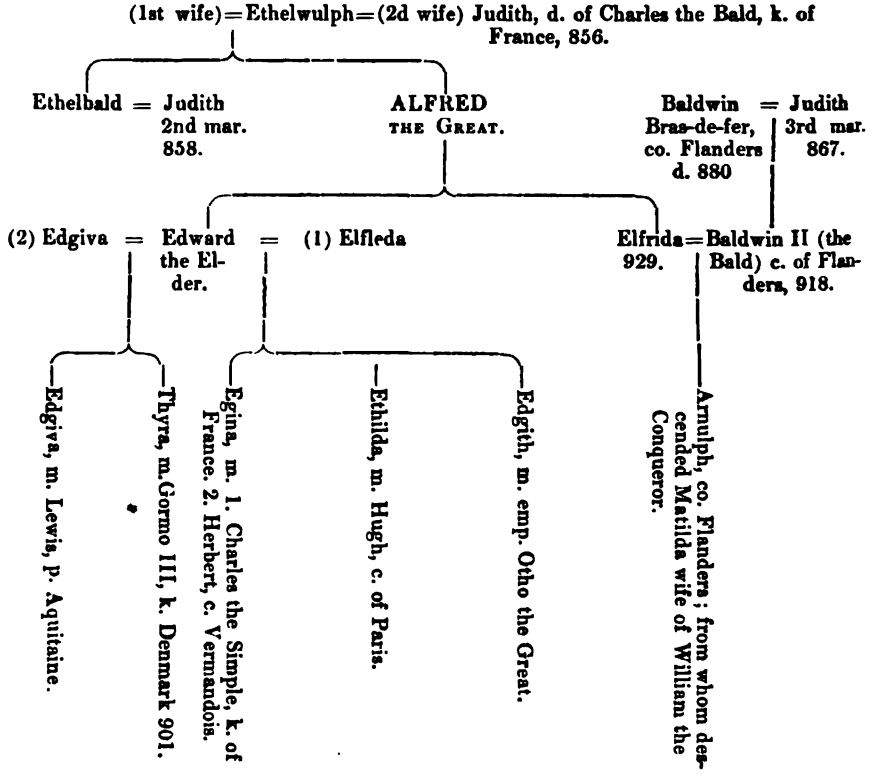
The death of the emperor Lewis the second—who, with various fortune, had spent a long life in defending Italy against the Saracens, and his own authority against the Lombards of Beneventum—opened to Charles the Bald the long wished for opportunity of

(3) From Arnulph, song of Baldwin II and Elfrida, was descended Matilda wife of William the Conqueror. In a generation later than Elfrida, no less than five grand-children of Alfred, daughters of his son Edward the elder, intermarried with continental princes,—two

arriving at the summit of his ambition. The pope John VIII, faithful to the promise of his predecessor Adrian, and disregarding the rights of the German princes, as the elder branch of the Carlovingian family, offered the title of emperor, with the crown of Italy, to the French king, which Charles, with equal disregard to the rights of his brother Lewis, did not hesitate to accept.

The year 875—four years after Alfred the Great was raised to the throne of the united Anglo-Saxon kingdoms on the death of his brother Ethelred,—witnessed the coronation of Charles the Bald as emperor and king of Italy. But so insecure was his tenure of his hereditary dominions, that the Christmas in which he was crowned at Rome was spent by Lewis, in the middle of France, in Charles's own palace of Attigny. As the new emperor returned, he received the iron crown of Lombardy at Milan, leaving his

of whom were of the highest rank,—Charles the Simple, and the emperor Otho the Great. The following pedigree shews all the marriages referred to in the text and in this note:



CALIFORNIA

brother in law Boson regent, with the title of duke of Pavia. Invested with these shadowy crowns, disdaining the customs of the Franks, and affecting the pomp, the language, and the habits of the antient emperors, Charles yet appealed to the bishops and received their sanction of his new honours and of all that he had done beyond the Alps.

876. He was preparing to march against his brother Lewis the German, when the death of that king, while it arrested his immediate design of retaliation for the recent irruption into the heart of France, opened to him new projects of aggrandizement. The memory of Lewis was dear to the German peoples whom he had protected by his victories against the Sclaves and the northern invaders. His subjects praised his piety, his justice, and disinterestedness; but the French could not acknowledge these virtues in a prince who had twice overrun their country, and whose long life had been spent in war against his father, his brothers, his nephews and his own son.[4] According to custom he subdivided his dominions among his three sons, leaving to Carloman, the eldest, Bavaria with the east marches, as Austria was then called, and his claims to the kingdom of Italy; to Charles le Gros, his second son, he bequeathed his German territories, with Helvetia and Alsace, including his pretensions on Burgundy and Upper Lorraine; to Lewis his third son—Saxony, Franconia, and Basse Lorraine.

The suzerainty of the Frank kingdoms had been transferred from Germany to France by the investiture of Charles the Bald with the imperial crown; and by successive steps, the youngest—and originally the least endowed, of the sons of Lewis le Debonnaire—had obtained possession of two thirds of the empire; and now, supporting his pretensions by a clause in the treaty of Mersen, he would have reduced his nephews Lewis and Charles under his tutelage, and sought to push the frontier of the French

(4) The Annals of Fulda compiled by a German monk, favor Lewis and betray a violent hatred of Charles the Bald. They call him "the tyrant of Gaul and a new Sennacherib." It is worthy of notice that in these Annals, the kingdom of Charles is always called GAUL, and his subjects GAULS; while the kingdom of Lewis, in the heart of Germany, is called FRANCE, and his subjects FRANKS. Bouquet; "Recueil des historiens de France." The distinction between the antient France, the intermediate or Austrasian France, and the new or Neustrian France, with the antipathies thence arising, have been already pointed out.

dominions to the Rhine. But the enterprise was postponed for one which was more tempting to the vanity inspired by his new dignity. Pope John VIII, reminding him that it had its duties as well as its rights and honours, implored him to cross the Alps in defence of the territory of St Peter against the Saracens, who since the death of the emperor Lewis II were overrunning Italy. The envoys of the pontiff repaired to him at Compiegne, representing in glowing colours the glory and the merit of a crusade against the infidels; and his own bishops could not refuse their sanction to so pious an enterprise. But the best interests of France were sacrificed to a chimerical project which paved the way for the loss of the province which had been the cradle of the Frank dominion in Gaul, and for the utter prostration of the royal authority in the other provinces of the empire. In both these aspects, therefore, the enterprise demands a particular notice.

The policy of Alfred in his dealings with the Danes is as much to be admired as the valour and skill with which he met them in the field. His victories had caused them to throw themselves in increased numbers on the coasts of France, and he had succeeded in detaching Rollo—who then held a subordinate command—from the other chiefs, and happily ridding his country of the most formidable, as it soon appeared, of all the daring pirates who in the course of the century launched their barks from the shores of Scandinavia. Rollo found in Alfred a genius greater than his own;—abandoning the invasion of Britain, he sailed for the Scheld and, having subjected the country to pillage and ransom, again embarked and entered the Seine. During the latter years of the reign of Charles the Bald almost every part of France had been successively exposed to the ravages of the Northmen. But when towns had been burnt, and monasteries sacked, and multitudes of every age and sex massacred, till the country was a desert and the footsteps of the invaders might be traced in fire and blood, they generally retired with their booty or the ransom with which their retreat had been purchased. But Rollo was now establishing himself at Rouen in the heart of a province which the feebleness of the Frank government was hastening to sacrifice. The enormous sum of five thousand *louis d'or* levied by Charles from his impoverished subjects, on the eve of his expedition into Italy, for the purpose of purchasing a pre-

carious truce during his absence, served only to expose the weakness of the Franks, and to inflame the avarice of the Norman chief.

The insubordination of the nobles and their repugnance to have the strength of the realm exhausted in a foreign enterprise of very doubtful promise were assuaged by sacrifices which gave a legitimate form to the independence they were struggling to assume. The capitulary enacted by Charles the Bald in a national assembly held at Kiersy-sur-Oise, on the eve of his Italian expedition, was quoted in after times by the barons as the charter of their liberties. Confirming and extending the concessions of the treaty of Mersen already noticed, it removed every legal obstacle to the assertion of those independent rights which ended in the hierarchical organisation of the feudal system. The counts and other officers were guaranteed in the absolute possession of their rank, and of the offices hitherto intrusted to them as the delegates of the sovereign; as well as in the transmission to their heirs of the dignities they held. Office as well as rank henceforth became hereditary, the crown renouncing the right to name the ministers of its jurisdiction.

The constitutions of Kiersy[5] deserve more attention than, independently of these provisions, they have hitherto received. They are a curious specimen of the legislation of the age, and throw considerable light on the state of society and of manners; combining the most important provisions with regulations of the most trivial details in the domestic affairs of the king. There are sections, as we have seen, which give the solution of the great constitutional question of the times; other capitularies betray great anxiety for the preservation of the game in the royal forests during the king's absence from the realm, pointing out in detail those which were to be strictly preserved, and excepting a small number for the amusement of the prince. In some of these he is prohibited from hunting the wild boar; and the keepers are enjoined to keep an exact account of the game killed. There is an ominous decree for the exaction of the tribute to be paid to the Northmen settled on the Seine. It was to be levied by the bishops, abbots, and counts, on their own and the royal vassals,

(5) Bouquet, Recueil, VII, 698.

divided into the three classes of *lords*, *coloni*, and *serviles*, in proportions ranging from twelve pence to four, three, or one, according to their rank or the value of the *mansus*, the farm or domain, they severally held. It gives us a glimpse of the state of the cities and towns, in the enactment that the traders who dwelt in them should be taxed, as far as it could be done, *(juxta possibilitatem)* according to what they owned in goods and chattels; thus drawing the distinction in the mode of taxation between real and personal property, and admitting a difficulty which perplexes modern legislators.

By one of these capitularies the emperor provides in which of his palaces his daughters shall reside, and which of his domains they are forbidden to occupy, during his absence. About to embark on a long and perilous journey, he directs that news of all kinds, whether good or bad, should be forwarded to him by couriers on horseback or messengers on foot, to relieve his anxiety as soon as possible: and he warns his faithful people, with great simplicity, not easily to believe reports of his death, which may be current on any occasion. He appoints his son Lewis *le Begue* regent during his absence, with a council of bishops and counts of which Hincmar was the head.

Such were the last legislative acts of Charles the Bald. He had plucked the brightest jewel from his crown to propitiate his nobles, he had imposed a grievous burthen on his subjects to buy off the hostility of Rollo; but all these sacrifices were in vain. The king and the pirate departed from France at the same time; the king never to return,—his visionary dreams of glory ending in the disgraceful abandonment of his enterprise at the approach of his nephew Carloman, and his sudden death, in 877, at an obscure village at the foot of Mont-Cenis, on his hasty retreat across the Alps. The pirate vi-king reappeared on the soil he had marked for his own, and lived to consummate the conquest of the most antient kingdom of the Neustrian Franks.

With Charles the Bald ended the nominal superiority which his restless and scheming ambition had restored to France. All his foreign acquisitions were lost, and he left to his feeble descendants, but the shadow of power in his proper dominions. The victories of Fontevraut and Saucourt, in which 90,000 Northmen

were said to have been slain, shed a momentary lustre on the short reign of Lewis le Begue; but Italy, Lorraine and Burgundy were severed from the crown of France, Brittany and Gascony withdrew their allegiance, and the original kingdoms of Neustria and Aquitain alone remained to be divided between his young sons. Their early deaths opened the way for the accession of Charles *le Gros*, the representative of the German line, to the French kingdoms, to the exclusion, for the present, of Charles the Simple, the youngest and pothumous son of Lewis le Begue.

In this part of our review, more especially, we feel the difficulty, with which we have had to contend throughout, of the attempt to trace in a rapid sketch the numberless changes, both dynastic and territorial, which the states of Europe underwent in the latter part of the ninth century. But some such thread of narrative is necessary to give significance to a survey of its political revolutions. In Charles le Gros the semblance of unity was again restored. Inheriting Bavaria and Italy from his elder brother Carloman, Saxony and Lorraine from his brother Lewis,—and now succeeding to the French kingdoms and invested with the title of emperor,—almost the whole of the empire of Charlemagne was again reunited. But the sceptre had fallen to feeble hands, and neither statesmen nor warriors were found to rally round the mockery of a royalty dignified with so many pompous titles, and guide the affairs, or arm in the defence, of the distracted empire.

The aged Hincmar, whose influence had supported and whose counsels had guided the son and grandsons of Charles the Bald, had no friendly feeling for the German emperor, and was about to quit the stage on which he had acted so distinguished a part. Two years after the accession of Charles le Gros, his city of Rheims was sacked by the Normans; the archbishop escaped across the Marne and died at Epernay, leaving a reputation for talent in the conduct of public affairs both in church and state, which no man of his times could equal. Generous and kind to those he loved, he set no bounds to his indignation against those who gave him cause of offence. His political administration, for the most part, had in view the real interest of his country; and, if he exalted the church of which he was the spiritual head, he rigorously maintained her discipline and courageously defended

her liberties. The ascendancy of the bishops in political affairs did not long survive his administration. Perhaps the brightest trait in the character—as it was the redeeming feature in that of his master Charles the Bald — was the continued patronage, amidst all the troubles of the times and perplexities of affairs, of literature, of schools and of learned men.

Soon after the death of Hincmar, king Alfred, who after the defeat and settlement of the Danes under Guthrum, was employing the longest interval of peace his inveterate enemies permitted him to enjoy, in establishing order and encouraging learning and the arts of industry, dispatched messengers to France to invite skilful and learned men to assist him in carrying into effect his wise and benevolent designs. We find that his former friend Grimbald, and John [5]—described by Asser as a priest and a monk of the celebrated abbey of Corbie—a man of great attainments in literature and the liberal arts, accepted the invitation. We may conceive the report made by the intelligent foreigners to their illustrious patron of the state of affairs at that time in the continental kingdoms, and we may understand with what thankfulness, among all his discouragements, Alfred turned from the contemplation of falling kings and dismembered states, insubordinate nobles, and heathenism rampant, to his own happier prospects. While he was occupied in erecting castles, fortifying towns, and rebuilding London, Paris the antient *Lutetia*,—"that noble capital," as an old writer describes it, "resplendent with glory, the treasury of kings, the gate of nations"—the fauxbourgs of which had been so often reduced to ashes, was menaced with utter destruction. Deserted by the pusillanimity of Charles le Gros, it was saved with difficulty, after a long siege, by the valour of Eudes, its count and duke of France, whose star was now rising to the ascendant.

Alfred was at this time also laying the foundation of that naval power, in which his countrymen have since been so preeminent.

(5) Some writers consider that this John was Erigena the Irishman already mentioned, who after the death of Charles the Bald attached himself to Alfred. Turner, Anglo-Saxon Hist. v. 1, p. 291. II, 380. Lingard however thinks otherwise. If Asser is correct in his description of John as "of the race of the Eald (or old) Saxons," he must have been another person; but the probabilities of the case, and some circumstances connected with the tragic story of his death favour the idea that this John and John Erigena were the same.

Master of the narrow seas he could at least close his ports against the descent of fresh hordes of pirates; while the mouths of the Scheld, the Seine and the Loire were open to their irruptions, and no exertions were made by the distracted princes of the continent to meet the enemies on their proper element. The coasts of the Mediterranean were equally unprotected; the fleets of the Greek emperor being the only force which could cope with the gallies of African and Andalusian corsairs, while they were employed maintaining the distant connection with the cities and provinces in the south of Italy which still continued their allegiance to the emperor of the east. Under the Arabian caliphs in Spain great attention was paid to naval affairs. Their invasions of Sicily and the other islands, with the conquest of Crete, which they long retained against all attacks of the Greek emperor—challenge for them the claims of superiority to every other naval power in the waters of the Mediterranean.[6]

Little need be added in continuation of the review we have already taken of the affairs of Spain under the caliphs of Cordova, to bring them down to the close of the century. Under the government of a line of able and enlightened princes, the successors of Abdalrahman II, Spain made made continual progress in literature, science and art—and in general prosperity. Their friendly relations with the Frank princes were not seriously interrupted by the unsettled state of the times in which rebel emirs were often found fighting under the banners of insubordinate counts; and successive ambassadors from the caliph Mohammed to the court of Charles the Bald were received with honour at Senlis and Compiegne.[1]

In the reign of Almandher, who was cotemporary with Charles

(6) We have no means of ascertaining whether Alfred's famous mission to the shrine of St Thomas in India was a naval expedition through the Mediterranean; but that route was probably preferred to the long and more perilous journey through the deserts of central Europe and Asia. Whether his envoys reached the coast of Malabar by what is now called the "Overland route," that is, by way of Egypt, embarking again at Suez on the Red Sea, or by the Euphrates and the Persian gulf, is also matter for speculation. That in the tenth century there were trading voyages from Egypt to India we learn from a geographical treatise written by Cosmas, a merchant of Alexandria surnamed INDICO-PLEUSTES, or the Indian navigator. It is probable that the fame of the precious gems and aromatic confections which Alfred's messengers imported from India may have assisted in turning the attention of the free cities of Italy, now rising to importance, to the trade of the East.

(1) A good history of the Arabs in Spain is still wanting in English Literature.

le Gros, the rising power of the Christian princes, Alphonso in the Asturias and Sancho in Navarre, who had threatened the Spanish frontier, was signally checked by a great victory on the Douro, and the siege of Zamora. Under his successor Abdallah, Provence was colonized by Andalusian invaders who, making Fraxinet their principal post, held it for a long course of years extending into the next century. From thence establishing themselves at St Maurice in the Valais, they held the passes of the Alps, and the Christian pilgrims to the shrine of St Peter, at the close of the ninth century, were exposed to the same perils and exactions at the hands of the infidels which, two centuries later, roused the population and the chivalry of Europe to crusades for clearing the way to the tomb of our Saviour.

The deposition of Carles le Gros by the Frank nobles and bishops, assembled at Trewer near Mayence on the Rhine, sealed the humiliation of the Carlovingian dynasties. The dismemberment of the empire was rendered more striking by its shortly succeeding the reunion under the same sceptre of all the populations emancipated by the peace of Verdun. After a struggle of forty years between the Franks of Germany, and the Franks of Gaul, that treaty was consummated by the revolution of 888, which completed the political separation of the three greater states, admitted several lesser kingdoms into the European system, and prepared the way for further, and still more minute, divisions of territory and sovereignty.

The times were such that personal merit was more regarded in the choice of rulers than legitimacy of birth; but the brilliant qualities of Arnulph of Carinthia were doubtless enhanced by his descent, as the natural son of Carloman, from the blood of Charlemagne regarded with respect by the counts and nobles by whom he was raised to the throne of Germany. He not only consolidated the peace of his own kingdom by imposing respect on the great vassals and securing its safety by victories over the Northmen of the Scheld and the Sclaves of Moravia, but, whether it was owing to his power, or to his pretensions, though by an impure source, to be the representative of Charlemagne, the German king exercised a certain preeminence in the new political

system of Europe. The kings of France, Italy and Burgundy paid him homage, and he disposed of the kingdom of Lorraine in favour of his natural son Zwentibald.

Italy, always the theatre of German ambition, was distracted by the rival pretensions of Guy and Berenger, the powerful dukes of Spoleto and Friuli, both of whom were crowned kings of Italy, as well as emperors. Arnulph interfered in the contest on the part of Berenger, eventually assuming himself the titles of emperor and king. The Italians, impatient of foreign domination, regarded Guy, and Lambert his son and successor, as national kings under whom alone their independence was secure. Lambert had not been able to prevent the coronation of Arnulph as emperor and king of Italy, but his recall by an incursion of the Moravians was followed by the re-accession of Guy, who made peace with Berenger, the Adda being fixed for the boundary of their territories, and reigned as emperor till the last years of the century.

899. Arnulph after his retreat from Italy languished and died at Ratisbon. He was succeeded in the kingdom of Germany by his son Lewis the infant, with whose short and feeble reign was extinguished the German branch of the house of Charlemagne. It seems probable that the German monarchy would have fallen into a state of dissolution from internal anarchy and the barbarian invasions on its eastern frontier, but for the fidelity of Otho, the great duke of Saxony, who as governor of his young brother-in-law defended with disinterested loyalty the rights of a crown which his posterity wore.

France, overrun by the Northmen, could find no safety but in setting aside the pretensions of Charles the Simple, the legitimate heir, and creating a national sovereignty in the person of Eudes—son of Robert the Strong, count of Paris—a brave soldier who had already distinguished himself in the defence of his country. Some years after the election of Eudes, a German faction called Charles the Simple to the throne of France, and supported by Arnulph, to whom he was a suppliant and gave his homage, Charles also was crowned king of France and obtained possession of some territory on the German frontier. On the death of Eudes he succeeded to the whole of the dominions of which he was lawful heir. His feeble reign of 27 years, prolonged far into

the tenth century, has few claims on our notice. It was emb
tered by the insubordination of the great nobles who for a ti
held him in captivity, and elected Robert, brother of Eudes, kin
Charles the Simple married Egina the eldest of the grand-daughte
of Alfred the Great. The most remarkable, and perhaps t
most politic act of his administration,—which however belon
to a somewhat later period, having taken place in 911—was t
investiture of Rollo the Norman chief in the duchy of Normand
with the hand of his daughter in marriage. A brave and hig
minded prince would never have torn so bright a jewel from h
crown; but Charles the Simple found in the duchy of Normand
not only a barrier against fresh invasions of the Northern pirat
but his best defence against the aggressions of his own insubo
dinate nobles.

In the dismemberment of the empire, to the three great div
sions of the European states—Germany, Italy and France, we
added two kingdoms of the lesser order. Boson, brother-in-la
of Charles the Bald, after losing his duchy of Pavia, had est
blished himself in Cis-juran Burgundy on the death of Lewis
Begue, assuming the title of king of Provence. His son Lew
succeeded him at the time of the general disruption, and in th
last year of the century was crowned also emperor and king
Italy, the third of that name.

Transjuran Burgundy, including the territories between th
Jura, the Rhone and the Reuss,—that is, Switzerland, the Valai
Chablais and the Genevese—was appropriated in the gener
dislocation of states by Rodolph Welf, with the style of king
Burgundy. He too in the ensuing century was crowned king
Italy, the battle ground of all pretenders. The two Burgundie
were afterwards reunited, and continued in the posterity o
Rodolph as the kingdom of Arles.

The spectacle which has now been presented to our view—rival
kings of Italy and of France, emperors without an empire, and
kings possessing but fragments of the kingdoms of which each
had received the forms of investiture—discloses a state of affairs
from which it may be perceived that the settlement of Europe after
the death of Charles the Bald was no more stable than that which
had been attempted by the treaty of Verdun, nearly half a century

before. The empire is dismembered, we find five[8] kingdoms instead of three, and the political dissolution is still in progress.

It has been well observed[9] that the counts and barons were the real heirs of Charles the Bald. What were Boson and Eudes, Arnulph and Rodolph, Berenger and Guy, but powerful vassals who, in the anarchy of the times, rose to the rank of kings? In every quarter the great feudatories were establishing independent sovereignties differing little but in name from those of the kings. In France alone, before the end of the ninth century, twenty nine provinces or fragments of provinces were already erected into small states, the antient governers of which, under the names of dukes, counts, viscounts, had become their true sovereigns. The importance of these states was not equal, nor their independence absolutely alike; some still kept up frequent relations with the king of France; others were under the protection of a powerful neighbour; certainties united them, and hence certain reciprocal obligations resulted which became the constitution of the feudal society. But the dominant feature was, not the less, isolation—independence; they were evidently so many small states born of the dismemberment of a great territory—local government, formed at the expence of the central power. These powerful fiefs had a long political existence; sovereigns hereditarily succeeded sovereigns; they had their distinct laws and customs, their wars, and their separate histories.

Some of the founders of these fiefs belonged to families which already possessed historic names; such as Gerard of Roussillon and Guiafer of Gascony, the celebrated heroes of romance; and the antient dukes of Brittany who withstood the arms of Charlemagne himself. Others of the great feudatories rose to eminence

(8) Some modern writers reckon SIX, counting the kingdom of Navarre, which can hardly be considered part of the Carlovingian empire; others SEVEN, including Lorraine, which was only an investiture by Arnulph of part of his own dominions in favour of his son Zwentibold, terminating with him. It has been already remarked that the Anglo-Saxon politicians had very accurate information of continental affairs, and that Alfred's sister Queen Ethelswith was on her way to Rome in the very year when the final dismemberment of the empire had been just accomplished. A most exact account of the division into five kingdoms, with a reference to the superior claims of Arnulph, is inserted in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.

See the Harmony p. 98 of this volume under the years 887-888. ODA or ODO is the German form of the Latinized EUDES, and WITHA, or GWITHA, of GUY.

(9) MICHELET. HISTOIRE DE FRANCE.

—some to royalty—in after times. There were the Gastons and Taillefers of Bearn and Thoulouse, and the counts of Anjou from whom sprung the royal houses of the Capets and Plantagenets; not to mention the Baldwins of Flanders; and the great Norman chiefs, Rollo in Normandy, and Thibaut count of Tours and lord of Chartres, progenitor of the houses of Blois and Champagne, who having changed their names in baptism became naturalized, and shut the Seine and the Loire for ever against the pirates of the north.

The Anglo-Saxon monarchy during the time of Alfred and for a long period afterwards seems to have suffered but little from that insubordination among the superior nobility which ended in dismembering the empire of Charlemagne. The individual character of such princes as Alfred and Athelstan and Edgar was a guarantee such as that of none of the Carlovingian kings afforded against any encroachment on their rights of sovereignty. Besides, in England the German institutions, which the Anglo-Saxons inherited as well as the Franks, still subsisted almost entire. Royalty in its simpler form borrowed little or nothing from Roman imperial traditions which swelled the pretensions of the Frankish sovereigns. The right of election did not become, as on the continent, a mere form, but the most qualified of the royal race was generally chosen, to the exclusion often of the heir by regular descent, and this was a bond of union between the king and the nobles. They had also a continual voice in the Witenagemot, the national assemblies without whose consent no public measures were decided, which left them without pretence for usurping an undue share of political power; while that of the kings was moderated by the continuance of these assemblies and the free spirit of the people.

The Ealderman, the highest dignity in the state, was simply a magistrate appointed by the sovereign to administer justice and array the people for war or defence—in that particular the type of our present Lieutenants of counties. The dignity was neither territorial nor hereditary. After the accession of Canute the Ealderman became an Earl—the Norwegian Jarl—and when the whole island was subdued and united under one sovereign the fashion was introduced of intrusting great provinces to a single

Earl, while originally the English counties, each under its own Alderman, were not of a size to encourage the usurpation of their governors. From that era the provincial governors began to overpower the royal authority as they had done on the continent, and England under Edward the Confessor was not far removed from the condition of France under Charles the Bald.

The feeble reigns of Charles the Simple in France, and Lewis the Infant in Germany, were commencing, and Italy was divided between Guy and Berenger, at the time that Alfred—unaffected by foreign revolutions and unembarrassed by the insubordination of the great nobles, which palsied the strength of the continental kings—was called upon to oppose with the whole force of his realm a combination of the Northmen more formidable than any which it had yet been his fortune to resist.

The veteran Hastings, driven from the Scheld by a victory which shed lustre on the close of the reign of Arnulph, concentrated his forces at Boulogne and determined on a fresh invasion of England. From the magnitude of his armament, and the combinations which the hoary and experienced pirate effected with the Danes already settled in East Anglia and Northumbria, it appears that he meditated no less than the conquest of the whole island. We are led to think of other conquests, and other menaces of invasion issuing from that coast of the channel, when we are told that having assembled a fleet of 250 ships, he "transported" his whole force "at one time, with their horses withal," and landed them safely on the coast of Sussex. In the fastnesses of the great wood which even now overspreads the Wealden or central districts of Sussex and Kent—the *Sylva Anderida*, or *Coed Andred* of the Britons—120 miles in length and 30 in breadth, they were able to maintain themselves building a fort of timber, while their allies in the north were exhausting the strength of Alfred's forces. The war raged for three years from the Humber to the south coast, and from the mouth of the Thames to Exeter and to Chester on the borders of north Wales; and a fortified camp on the river Lea within reach of London, already a place of importance, but not as yet the capital, was held by the main body of the army of Hastings till it was broken up in consequence of a skilful manœuvre of Alfred.

Meanwhile a murrain of cattle, and a pestilential disorder, lessened his resources, and carried off a vast number of his noblest generals and bravest soldiers. But the genius of Alfred prevailed against all difficulties. The war had been waged by sea as well as by land; but a number of ships built on his own skilful models, of a size and proportion differing from that both of the Danish and Frisian vessels, gave him the superiority. All the efforts of the bold and experienced pirate were foiled, and, his dreams of conquest abandoned, he fled for ever from the shores of England. This crowning success of Alfred's career freed his kingdom from apprehension of foreign invasion, and reduced to submission the Northmen already settled in the country. Living three years afterwards glorious and beloved, he left his kingdom united and well regulated, unshaken in its political organization, unimpaired in its material prosperity, notwithstanding the ravages to which it had been exposed, and making advances in civilization and knowledge, in trade and in naval power,—a state of affairs in strong contrast with that of the other European kingdoms.

Our third and last point of view of the political state of Europe in the ninth century was to be taken from this era. It has been gradually opening to us from just before the middle of the century, when we saw the empire of Charlemagne divided into three great kingdoms. We have followed the progress of its dismemberment until, at the close of the century, we see it split into several small kingdoms and a number of other almost independent states, connected by slender ties with the sovereignties of which they were nominally members. But the tendency to dissolution was not stayed at this point; the relaxation of the bonds of central authority still increased, and if we extend our view into the tenth century we shall find that before its close every lord of a domain asserted within his own seignory independent sovereign rights, with the reservation only of a suzerainty to the national king or to some one of the great feudatories similar to that which was the only badge of their own subjection to the chief of the state.

Empires of unwieldy bulk, like that of Charlemagne, have several times been dissolved by the usurpation of provincial

governors, as is recorded both in antient history and in that of the Mahomedan dynasties of the east; and some persons have been satisfied with supposing that they discover in that analogy a sufficient cause of the phenomenon the principal crises of which we have now followed. Others have assigned the decay of the empire to the incapacity of Charlemagne's successors;—if they had possessed the genius and character of its founder it would have still subsisted. According to others, the Normans have to answer for its ruin; their constant invasions, the misery and despair of the people shattered the powers of government and brought about all the evil.

Another solution of the problem has been given by several writers, but M. Thierry has developed its principles with the greatest ingenuity.[10] According to him, the dismemberment of the empire of Charlemagne was brought about by the antagonism of races. On the death of Charles, when the powerful hand which held together so many different nations was withdrawn, they first separated, and then grouped themselves according to their several varieties of origin, language and manners; and under this influence was accomplished the formation of new states. No doubt there was a strong antagonism between the different populations; and the division of the empire after the civil wars among the sons of Lewis le Debonnair originated in a feeling of nationality as well as in the ambition of the princes. It appeared more distinctly in the struggle for Eudes the elective king of France against the legitimate king Charles the Simple—a struggle which was only terminated by the exclusion of the Carlovingian dynasty and the accession of Hugh Capet in the following century.

But the dismemberment of the empire did not merely arise from the struggle of origin or nationality; for the races were divided in the interior of almost all the kingdoms into which it was divided. We have already remarked the divergency of political opinion between the Franks of Germany and the Franks of Gaul. We saw them ranged under opposite banners at the great battle of Fontenai, uniting themselves, though of the same race, with the mixed societies in which they lived. Geographical posi-

(10) Lettres sur l'histoire de France. XI and XII.

tion, personal interests and other special causes evidently had their share in bringing about the greater divisions, and the consideration of race is still more foreign to the question of the causes of the dismemberment of the duchies and counties and lordships into which each kingdom was subdivided. There was in them no such struggle of origin or nationality, and yet there was separation, dismemberment, the same as among the great masses of population of which the kingdoms were formed.

It is therefore necessary that we should penetrate below the surface of events to ascertain the principle which was most influential in the dissolution of the empire of Charlemagne and the formation of the new states. It appears to have had its origin in the instincts and the habits of the conquering race. These were opposed to centralization and tended to separation and independence. A great consolidated empire was incompatible with the genius and habits of the Franks.

If we know anything of the character of the antient Germans, independence—individuality, was its predominant feature. Every member of the tribe had a hand in raising the chief of their election on the buckler, a voice in the free deliberations of its assemblies. He was attached to his chief, but his service was in great measure voluntary. In foreign inroads he followed the bravest and the best.—In that simple state of society, there is little inequality of rank. The warriors were the associates of their chief, they shared his dangers, his pleasures, and the spoils of his enterprises. It has been justly and beautifully said that "personal independence, the pleasure of enjoying existence vigorously and unrestrained, amidst the uncertainties of the world and of life, the luxury of action without labour, the love of a destiny full of adventure, of unforseen events, of inequality and of danger, are the ruling principle of the barbarian state." It is the same in the original races of the St Lawrence and Keiskamma as it was among the long-haired tribes who roamed through the forests from the Rhine to the Danube. May not vestiges of the same idiosyncrasy be traced now in individual characters of our own race which the transmuting and civilizing processes of a thousand years have not sufficed to eradicate?

Conquest made some difference in the relative positions of the

members of the invading tribes. It raised the chief to a barbarian royalty which affected the exclusive privileges of their new rank. But large portions of the conquered territories were parcelled out among his followers. The leading men were still his companions and formed his court, his *leudes*, his *peers*. The brotherhood of arms has always involved a certain sense of equality. In later ages, when the distinctions of rank had become still greater, knighthood conferred the privilege of companionship with princes. Even at this day kings address their nobles as cousins. Charlemagne had his *peers*. The tenure on which the Franks held their lands is not very well defined. Service in war was its principal element. The ties which united them to their chief admitted of a large share of independence. Isolated on their domains, that element in the German character had full scope for its developement. They too had their followers of lesser rank, their companions and subportionists of their lands, who held of them, as they did of the king. The conquered race, freeholders or serfs, gradually attached themselves to their new lords. The bond that existed between the conquerors, the individual attachment of man to man, the principle of fidelity, was carried into the new society. In it we discover the germs of that organization which a century later became feudality,—and in the communities thus formed, we find the origin of the states which, each under its own lord, rose to independence in the dismemberment of the empire.

The system of Charlemagne may be viewed under a twofold aspect, one pointing to the Roman, the other to the German institutions. In his imperial capacity his leading idea was centralization. All power emanated from the sovereign; in the provinces it was delegated to officers nominated by him, who represented the proconsuls and prefects of the old imperial system. In his name they raised forces, administered justice, maintained order and received tribute. Imperial commissioners, *missi dominici*, specially dispatched from the seat of government, sustained the unity of its administration, enforced its decrees, reported misrule and rectified abuses. But Charlemagne was king of the Franks, as well as emperor. The German element of his government is discovered in the national assemblies, belonging to the free institutions of the Franks, in the relations subsisting between the sovereign and his great officers—the military patronage;—in their judicial forms. It entered therefore largely into the provincial government.

It was from the ranks of the privileged class, the Frankish nobility, that the governors of duchies and counties and the minor divisions of the Carlovingian empire were selected—very different persons from the proconsuls and prefects of the Roman Cæsars. Those magistrates were strangers, with no territorial rights, in the provinces they administered. Rome—Italy was their home. They had no more hold of the soil, no closer bond of union with the provincial populations, than the governors of colonies in our own times. Members of the great municipality under the forms of which the world was governed, patricians, senators, consuls,—and trained in a system of regular hierarchical subordination, they might amass wealth, but territorial aggrandizement, as a means of power, was foreign to their ideas.

The case of the great officers of the Carlovingian empire was different. At first, indeed, they were merely delegates of the sovereign, removable at his pleasure. But, even then, there were vassals who held, sometimes hereditarily, more frequently for life, domains through the extent of which they exercised, mostly in their own names, partly in that of the emperor, a certain jurisdiction and most of the rights of sovereignty. Some of the provincial governors combined both these characters—perhaps in the same province—delegates of the imperial authority, and independent on their own lands. Under such circumstances the tendency to identify the personal with the territorial dignity must have been very great. In the course of a few generations, as we have seen in the time of Charles the Bald, honours and jurisdictions became hereditary as well as domains, and the provinces were virtually independent states.

Advancing a step higher, we find the principle of division prevalent in the rules of succession which the customs of the Franks applied to the inheritance of their kings. It was coeval with the founder of the Merovingian line, for Clovis divided his states between his four sons. Charlemagne himself shared the inheritance of the dominions of Pepin with his brother Carloman; and so deeply rooted was the principle that, notwithstanding his great comprehensive idea of a consolidated empire and of central unity in the administration, we find the restorer of the western empire dividing his dominions between his sons. The custom was followed by his successors, with results more and more disastrous;

for to the animosities and the ambitious projects of the rival princes of his race may be attributed, perhaps more than to any other cause, the dismemberment of his empire. "A kingdom divided against itself cannot but fall."

Towards the close of the ninth century the political horizon was darkened by the sudden appearance of a portentous cloud which hung for a time on the frontier of civilization and then burst with fury on the fairest provinces of Europe. After a long and various peregrination from the borders of China, or the wilds of Siberia and Lapland, the Turkish hordes of Hungarians approaching the limits of the western empire settled in the Roman province of Pannonia, the modern kingdom of Hungary. Its occupiers the Moravians, who under their king Zwentibold had risen to preeminence over all the Sclavonian tribes, fled before them. Germany, Italy, France were blasted by the tempest; and for half the ensuing century Europe trembled at their name. The deliverance of Christendom was achieved by the Saxon princes, Henry the Fowler, who rose from a bed of sickness to battle and victory,—and Otho the Great, who finally broke the power of the Hungarians.

Such was the aspect of European affairs at the death of Alfred the Great. The dismemberment of the Carlovingian empire was complete, and anarchy universal. The royal authority was shattered, the ascendancy of the clergy quailed before the clash of arms. Power passed into the hands of the dukes and counts and lords among whom the territories were distributed; and the people found their only hope of safety in rallying round those who were able to defend the country. From this anarchy and dismemberment resulted, after a terrible crisis, the organization of the territorial aristocracy in a vast hierarchy, which, connecting all classes in a regular chain of subordination and with reciprocal rights and duties—from the king to the serf attached to the soil—under the name of the feudal system, governed Europe for many succeeding centuries.

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON THE JOURNEY OF KING ETHELWULF AND HIS SON ALFRED TO ROME: SEE PAGE 285.

On reference to the "Harmony of the Chroniclers," pp. 17, 18, it will be seen that the Saxon Chronicle (with which Ethelwerd and Simeon of Durham corres-

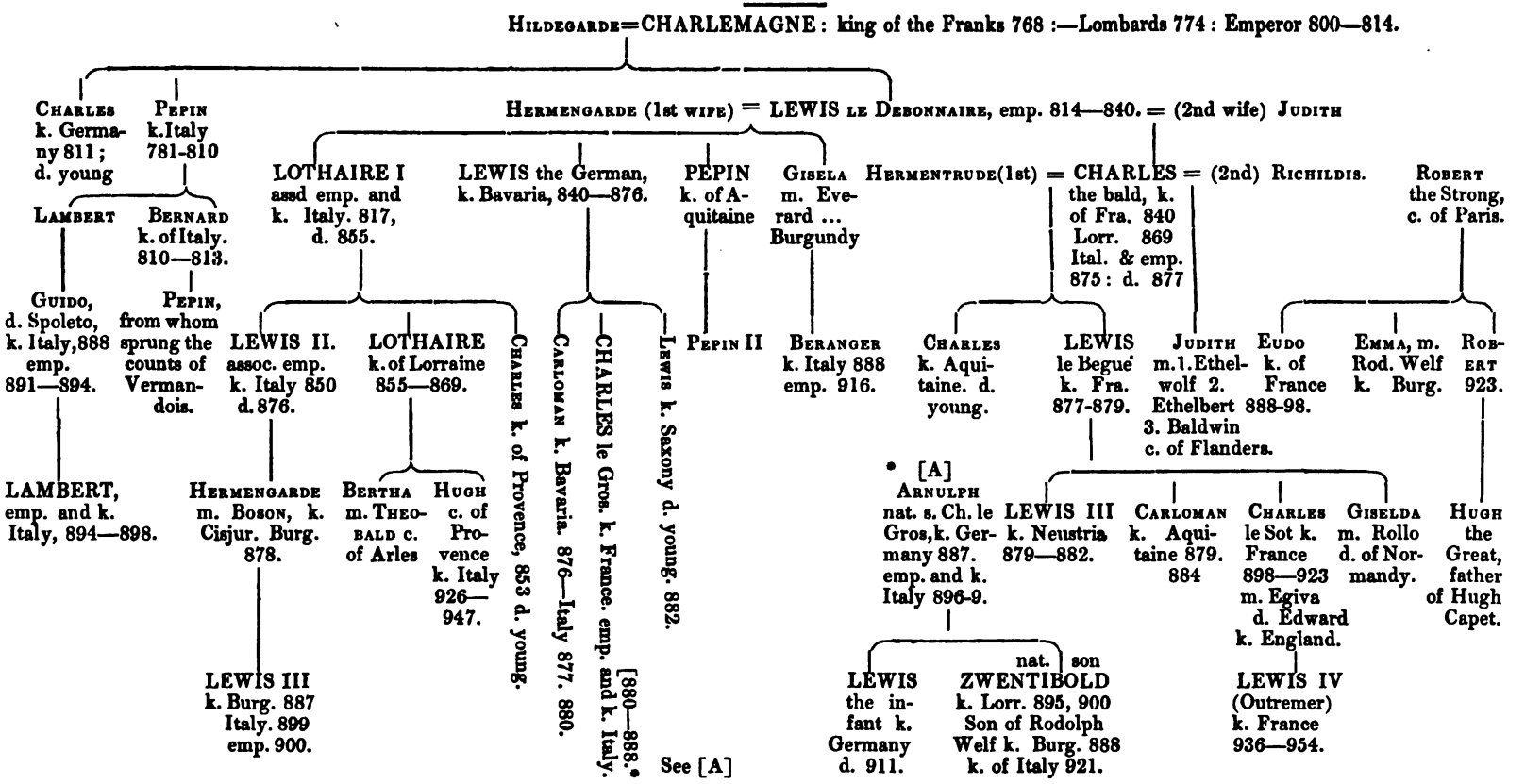
pond) notices only *one* journey of Alfred to Rome—that which is here referred to,—while Asser, Florence of Worcester, and Huntingdon represent the young prince as making a second journey to Rome, in company with Ethelwulf, two years later. A subsequent entry in the Saxon Chronicle (inserted in the "Harmony" from a later MS.) suggests the idea that Alfred remained at Rome during the interval of the two journeys, and this would so far reconcile the two statements as they represent Ethelwulf and Alfred to have been at Rome together.

But there is the additional difficulty, in accepting this last entry as authentic, that it makes the Pope (Leo) consecrate Alfred king "after that he had heard that Ethelwulf was dead," whereas Leo himself died the same summer in which the two Saxon princes were at Rome, and Ethelwulf lived two years after his return; besides which, there is no sort of evidence or probability that Alfred did not *at least* accompany his father *home.*

Suspicion is said to attach to the whole account on the ground of the improbability that the young prince was consecrated king while he had elder brothers living. But all the Chronicles agree in that particular, and it is also clear that Alfred was a favourite son; so that, in an elective monarchy, and at a time when the several kingdoms of the Heptarchy were scarcely consolidated, and partitions of territory were a common practice, it might be the policy of Ethelwulf to obtain so high a sanction to the pretensions of the best beloved of his sons to some share in the succession. It may also be considered that the object of Ethelbald's rebellion during his father's absence may have been to defeat the plans of Ethelwulf in favour of Alfred.

It is also objected that Alfred's continued sojourn at Rome cannot be reconciled with his want of early education, as related by the chroniclers. In an age when it was a rare occurrence for a layman, of whatever rank, to be able to read or write, and particularly in the state of ignorance which Alfred himself describes as existing in his own times, there is no difficulty in accepting his own account of the late period at which he acquired the knowledge of letters, unless we adopt the suggestion of his having remained at Rome for a period of some duration. In his father's court his boyish years would probably be employed in active exercises and accomplishments, and his only mental acquirement might be learning by rote the old songs and ballads of his country which he afterwards took so much pains to learn to read. But if the young prince resided for great part of three years in a most lettered and polished court, under the guardianship of so enlightened a prelate as Pius IV, the total neglect of the first rudiments of education in such a case seems wholly unaccountable. We incline therefore, on the whole, to the commonly received tradition of the *repeated* visit, particularly as the accounts in the Chronicles are not conflicting and all that can be said is—that in some of them the notice of the second journey is omitted. Taking that view, the very tender years of Alfred joined to the limited period of his first visit, and the distractions and unsettled state of affairs during the second, may account for a neglect which to our ideas appears almost incredible.

PEDIGREE OF THE CARLOVINGIAN KINGS AND EMPERORS IN THE NINTH CENTURY.



VI. DESCRIPTION OF

KING ALFRED'S JEWEL, WITH SOME OBSERVATIONS

ON

THE ART OF WORKING IN GOLD AND SILVER

AMONG THE ANGLO-SAXONS.

The beautiful gem, of which an engraving is given in this work, was accidentally found, according to Gorham's History of St Neot's, "in 1693, at Newton Park, some distance north of the site of Athelney abbey in Somersetshire, near the junction of the Parrot and the Thone; the spot to which Alfred retired during the Danish troubles, and where he afterwards founded a monastery." It is now preserved in the Ashmolean museum at Oxford. In 1698 it was in the possession of colonel Nathaniel Palmer, of Fairfield in Somersetshire; and in 1718 it was deposited in the Ashmolean Museum, by his son Thomas Palmer, esq.

The gift of the jewel is registered among other donations as follows:

A. D. 1718. Thomas Palmer de Fairfield in agro Somerset. Arm. Vir doctrina et virtutum comitatu spectatissimus picturam senis cujusdam (sancti forsan Cuthberti) auro crystalloque munitam, inter cimelia hujusce musei reponendam transmisit. Perantiquum hoc opus magni quondam Alfredi peculium Academiæ Oxon. legavit Thomas Palmer in eodem pago Militum Tribunus.

On a slip of paper in the same Register it is said:

Perantiquum hoc opus repertum erat prope Athelney pago Somersetensi oppidum ab Ælfredo rege frequentatum.

The engraving was made to embellish a small volume, published several years ago, on the "Coronation Service, or Consecration of the Anglo-Saxon kings, as it illustrates the origin of the

Constitution, by the Rev. Thomas Silver, D. C. L. of St. John's College, Oxford; formerly Anglo-Saxon Professor. Oxford, printed by W. Baxter, for J. Parker; and J. Murray, London. 1831." The same author,—who has allowed his engraving to be used for the present work—in a letter to the duke of Marlborough and the Right Hon. Baron Churchill, Lay-Rectors of the manor and parish of Charlbury, on the sacrilege and impolicy of the forced Commutation of Tithes, &c. Oxford 1842, has made some further observations on the subject, modifying the explanation which he had given of the Gem in the former work. The Gem has been frequently described and engraved; but all former representations of it are infinitely inferior to the exact delineation of it which accompanies these remarks.[1] The main substance or setting of it is of pure gold, containing coloured stones, covered by a remarkably thick crystal, through which is seen the miniature, formed of enamelled mosaic, the compartments being let into cells of gold; the figure is that of a man, holding a fleur-de-lis in each hand. Though manufactured nearly a thousand years ago, it is in perfect preservation, and only looks a little dull and dingy for the great length of time that has passed over it. The length of the Gem is about two inches, and it is about half an inch thick. Round the edge are engraved the words ALFRED MEC HEHT GEWYRCAN *Alfred had me worked,* in pierced gold letters. The narrow end of the Gem, at which the first and last

(1) A loose description, by Dr Musgrave, appeared in 1698, with two figures. [Philos. Trans. Dec. 1698, No. 247, vol. xx, p. 441.]—It was noticed more at large by Dr Hickes in 1700. [Philos. Trans. No. 260, vol. xxii, p. 464.]—A very detailed but not quite accurate account was given by Dr Hickes in 1705, with engravings of the obverse, reverse, and edge, the first figure being from a drawing by sir Robert Harley. [Hickesii Ling. Vett. Septent. Thesaur. tom. i. pp. viii. 142, 143. Oxon. 1705.]—It was described by Hearne, in 1711. [Hearne's Dissertation on the word Æstel, pp. xxiv, xxv, prefixed to Leland's Itinerary, vol. vii, edit. Oxon. 1769.]—It again exercised the talents of Dr Musgrave, in 1715, in a very elegant dissertation, accompanied by three engravings. [Musgravius, De Icuncula quondam M. Regis Ælfredi. 1715.—The opinions of the two former antiquarians were reviewed by Mr Wise, in 1722, whose criticism is accompanied with a figure of the obverse only. [Wise, in Asser. De Reb. Gest. Ælfredi, App. pp. 171, 172. Oxon. 1722.]—Some criticisms by Mr Pegge, and by Dr Mills, appeared in 1765. [Archæologia, vol. ii, pp. 73, 79.]—Engravings of this gem may be seen in Wotton, Ling. Vett. Septent. Thesaur. Conspectus, p. 18, edit. 1708; Shelton's Translation of Wotton, with notes, p. 14, edit. 1735; Marmora Oxon. P. III. fig. cxxxvii, edit. Chandler, 1763; Camden's Brit. vol. i, p. 77, edit. Gibson, 1722, and vol. i, p. 59, edit. Gough, 1789; in Life and Times of King Alfred the Great by the Rev. Dr Giles; and in Dr Pauli's Life of Alfred.—Most of these figures, however, seem to be copied from Hickes's plate, with little variation; they are much too large, and distorted representations.

words of this inscription meet, is formed into the head of some sea-monster, probably (says Dr Musgrave) a dolphin, or perhaps a griffin, the national emblem of the Saxons, having in its mouth a small tube, traversed by a strong rivet, to which a chain was doubtlessly attached; on the reverse of the gem, the lower jaw is wanting, and its place is supplied by a scaly flat surface.

As to the use to which this piece of jewelry was appropriated, opinion has been divided. Dr Hickes, Dr Musgrave, and the late Mr Whitaker, imagined that it must have been worn on the breast dependent from the chain that passed round the neck, in a way similar to ornaments which are still worn by kings and queens on state occasions. Some persons, however, have suggested that the rivet originally passed through some wooden stem to which it has been fixed, and which has perished.

Mr Hearne thought it probable that it was attached to the end of a cylinder, upon which a MS. was rolled, presented by the king to some monastery. Mr Wise and Mr Pegge conceived that it formed the head of a style.[2] Possibly it was mounted upon a standard, (after the manner of the Roman eagle,) or was elevated upon the summit of a staff, being carried into battle, for the purpose of animating the soldiers. This conjecture is hazarded as affording an easy solution of the fabulous narratives, which state that St Neot, after his decease, was the constant 'attendant' and 'forerunner' of Alfred; that he 'accompanied' the king in his engagement with the Danes near Chippenham, 'led on the troops,' 'preceded the standards,' 'fought in splendor before the army,' and 'gained the victory' for the Saxons. If we make some little allowance for the turgid expressions[3] of monkish chronicles,

(2) King Alfred sent a copy of his translation of St Gregory's Pastoral, together with an ÆSTLE, to each cathedral. The work, from three of those very MSS., will be given in the second volume of the Jubilee Edition.

(3) The following are the expressions in which these fables are recorded. "Ic þe tofore fare." [Sax. Hom. on St Neot, MSS. Cott. Vesp. D. XIV, in Hist. St Neot's, p. 260.]—"Teque tuosque ducam." "Prædux semper extiti tuus." Nonne videtis, Coram SPLENDIFERUM nobis bellare Neotum?" "PALMIFICUS SUUS NEOTUS." [Vita Sci Neoti, MSS. Bodl. 535, in Whitaker's St Neot.]—"Me (sc. Neoto) prævio gaudebis et protectore." "In itinere tuus extiti ductor." "Ego ante vos ibo, in conspectu meo cadent inimici." "Gloriosus servus Christi NEOTUS, SIGNIFER ET PRÆVIUS, regis antecedebat exercitum; quem videns Rex Alvredus, Commilitones, inquit, nonne videtis eum qui nostros conterit hostes? si nôsse desideratis, ipse est procul dubio Neotus, Christi miles invictissimus, per quem hodie PRÆSTO EST IN MANIBUS NOSTRIS PALMA VICTORIÆ!" [Vita Sci Neoti, MSS. Cott.

(superstitiously referring ordinary occurrences to the miraculous agency of the saint whose merits it was their object to extol,) these fables may be naturally traced to the simple fact that the king was accustomed to have this image of his guardian saint near his person, and that he conducted his army under its supposed tutelary influence. An inspection of the figure, holding the flowering branches in his hands, almost realizes the singular expression of the monkish historians, 'NEOTUS *palmificus*;' while the supposition that this image was elevated on a military banner, affords an easy interpretation to the apparently hyperbolical terms (as applied to a *deceased* saint,) 'NEOTUS *signifer et prævius* Regis antecedebat exercitum.'

" Mr Whitaker[4] supposes (very plausibly) that, after the victory of Chippenham, king Alfred presented this Jewel to the monastery of *Athelney*, in testimony of his pious gratitude to ST NEOT; 'there, probably, it remained till the Reformation; thence it was taken for plunder, or for preservation; and, in its removal, was accidentally lost, not far from its old depository.' "

The back of the Gem is a flat plate of gold (lying immediately upon the back of the miniature), and ornamented with a fleur de lis, branching into three stems, and traced in gold, without stones.

The front or principal face of the relic is smaller than the back, in consequence of the edge sloping inwards a little all round, so that the words engraved on it do not stand upright, a contrivance probably adopted, for the purpose of giving more effect to the front of the jewel, and making it stand out in stronger relief. The back-ground of the picture, under the crystal, is composed of a blue stone, on which appears a human figure, formed of enamelled mosaic, the compartments being let into cells of gold. The figure is that of a man, clothed in the green Saxon military vest or tunic, and girt with a belt, from which a strap for a sword depends towards the left side. The man is seated on the throne, with a cyne-helm or crown on its head, and in either hand he holds a sceptre, branching out, over the shoulders, into fleurs de lis.

Claud. A. V., in Mabillon, Acta Sanct. Sec. IV, P. II, pp. 334, 335.]—" Præcedam ante vexilla tua." [Chronicle of the Conventual Libr. of St. Neot's, MSS. Trin. Coll. Camb. R. 7. 28. in Gale Script. XX, Tom. I, p. 167.]

(4) Whitaker's Life of St Neot, p. 273. edit. 1806.

Various have been the conjectures[5] with regard to the figure on the obverse. Dr Hickes, in his Thesaurus, [vol. i, p. 144.][6] expresses his doubt whether the figure may have been intended to represent Jesus Christ, or St Cuthbert, who was a patron of king Alfred, and is said in an old legend[7] to have assisted him in his distress. But the author of the History of St Neot's tells us, that it was St Neot; because, as has been already remarked, he was the relative and the spiritual counseller of the king, and was venerated by Alfred above all other[8] saints. On this subject Dr Silver observes, "I thought formerly, that the figure in the Gem was a type of Alfred's office as king; but I am now convinced, that the figure itself is that of Jesus Christ, notwithstanding that it is clothed in the military vest of the Saxons; for it was the custom of those times to draw characters in their own dresses. The position of the image is founded on a passage in the 45th Psalm, verse 3, and which is still retained in the present Coronation Service; where the bishop says, 'Remember of whom it is said, Gird thyself with thy sword upon thy thigh, O thou most Mighty.'

"This is therefore our Saviour, the belt of the sword being seen surmounted with fleurs de lis. Our Saviour, as the Melchizedec, carries the double sceptre, one on each shoulder, the long sceptre representing the invisible Church in heaven, the shorter that on earth; both are surmounted with fleur de lis, or lilies, and both sceptres meet at a given point. Alfred was the first sovereign who was crowned with the tithe inherent in it, as attached to the order of Melchizedec. As the Anglo-Saxon kings and also the Normans considered themselves as the Gospelia or messengers of Christ, or the Vicarii Christi in terra, Alfred, under these

(5) Hickes at first suggested that it was a figure of our Saviour, the lily-sceptre in each hand denoting his double reign, in heaven and in earth: Musgrave ultimately adopted the same opinion. Hickes thought it, however, not improbable that it might be intended for the pope; but at last he concluded that it represents some saint; he was led to this opinion from the inscription of a miniature of St Luke, in an ancient MS. of the Gospels, drawn in a nearly similar manner, holding a flowery cross in each hand, [Ling. Vett. Septent. Thesaur. tom. i. p. viii. fig. 5.] Wise conceived that it depicted king Alfred himself, on account of the helmet and military vest, in which (as he supposed) the figure is represented.

(6) See also Musgrave, Phil. Trans. p. 247. Gesta Brit. 1716, and Wise's Asser, Vita Alf. p. 171.

(7) See SIMEON in page 71 of the present work.

(8) "Rex Alfredus, sanctorum pedibus acclivis et subditus, S. NEOTUM in summa veneratione habebat." Ingulphi Hist. Croyl. (Fulman, Script. p. 27.)

impressions of his state, ordered this image of our Saviour to be made and he wore it round his neck; from which probably it dropped.

"Connecting this picture of Christ as the Melchizedec, the tithe of the King as the Vicarius Christi in terra, the ancient Coronation Service of the Anglo-Saxon kings, the laws of Alfred and his reference in them to the apostolic council of Jerusalem, we may collect from the circumstances that Alfred considered that the tithe had been granted by himself, the State, and the landholders, to the invisible Melchizedec in heaven, and that the Crown power was the great trustee of the rights which all parties held on them."

Notwithstanding these observations, and the weight which must always attach to the opinion of persons so well versed in Anglo-Saxon Literature, the opinion which Dr Silver first promulgated, that the figure was an image of the king himself, and symbolical of the king's office, seems quite as tenable as the other. According to this view the two sceptres would aptly designate the spiritual and temporal authorities, which were united in the king's hands.

Sir Francis Palgrave, in a letter to a friend at Oxford, describes the jewel in the following words:

"Alfred's jewel, in the mechanical workmanship of the metallic portion, offers a close resemblance to the Icelandic ornaments, now made in the island, where the mode has probably continued by usage from the most remote periods. The enamel within, on the other hand, resembles some ornaments of the Carlovingian era now existing on the continent, which have been generally considered as oriental. The head at the extremity of the ornament, is extremely like what is found in those architectural ornaments usually called Saxon, e. g. the porch of St Margaret's at York. Whether St Neot be the personage represented in the enamel, I rather doubt, and I think it possible that the enamel itself was brought from the continent, and that the setting only was made in England. This would reconcile the two styles of workmanship: the metallic portion is unquestionably Anglo-Saxon, the enamel may be supposed to be from another country. But altogether it is one of the most curious relics of the kind—and no one, taking all the points of evidence together, can reasonably doubt but that it did belong to king Alfred."

The whole of this enquiry rests on too slender data to enable us to form any very decided opinion as to the symbolical character of the relic—for it is a mere matter of conjecture as to its having a symbolical character at all. As a specimen however of gold working of the ninth century the gem is an object of much interest, independently of its connection with our great and glorious king, and suggests many questions concerning the art of the goldsmith, as it was practised by our forefathers a thousand years ago.

Although this subject labours under great obscurity from the want of historical notices, yet a few passages are found in our old chroniclers and other writers which help us to form some definite ideas.

In the first place, it is conjectured that jewels in gold and silver were not only wrought with great elegance, but formed an article of contraband trade among the English even earlier than the reign of king Alfred. This inference seems justly to flow from a letter of Charlemagne to Offa king of Mercia, which, as Offa died in 795, must be referred to a date at least not later than that year. In this letter we find the following passage : "Concerning the strangers, who, for the love of God, and the salvation of their souls, wish to repair to the thresholds of the blessed apostles [*i. e. to go on pilgrimage to Rome,*] let them travel in peace without any trouble; nevertheless, if any are found among them not in the service of religion, but in the pursuit of gain, let them pay the established duties at the proper places." As such pilgrims could not very well conceal about their persons merchandise of a more bulky kind, it is thought that trinkets of the precious metals and stones of different sorts, were the articles which these pilgrims tried to smuggle. Moreover, if this be correct, such trinkets must have been wrought in England, and it even appears that the English jewellers, at this early period, were well known over all Europe.[1] We find among the Canons of Egbert archbishop of York, written about A. D. 750, a prohibition to Christians against imitating the manners of the Jews or partaking of their feasts; which seems to prove that Jews were settled in the north of England so early as the middle of the eighth century : and we know that the Jews, wherever they have attained a footing, have carried with

(1) Macpherson's Annals of Commerce, i, 248.

them the trade in jewellery, gold and silver ornaments, and other such luxuries, because they have been excluded by the laws from almost every other occupation.

"King Alfred kept up, in the latter part of his life, a yearly communication with Rome; and, as we learn from Asser, he corresponded with Abel, patriarch of Jerusalem, who sent him several valuable oriental commodities. His embassy to the Christians in India is mentioned, not only by Malmesbury and other authorities of the next age, but by the contemporary compiler of the Saxon Chronicle, who says that bishop Swithelm made his way to St Thomas and returned in safety. Malmesbury gives Sighelm as the name of the adventurous bishop of Sherborne, and relates that he brought back from India aromatic liquors and splendid jewels; some of the latter, Malmesbury says, were still remaining in the treasury of his church when he wrote in the twelfth century. Sighelm is stated to have left England in the year 883, and to have gone in the first instance to Rome, from which he probably sailed up the Mediterranean to Alexandria, and then made his way by Bassora to the Malabar coast, where it is certain that a colony of Syrian Christians who regarded St Thomas as their apostle, were settled from a very early period. Asser relates that he received on one occasion as a present from Alfred a robe of silk and as much incense as a strong man could carry: these precious commodities must have been obtained from the East."[2] Macpherson, in his Annals of Commerce, thinks it also not impossible that mines of the precious metals may have been wrought at this time in England, and part of the produce exported, although the existence of such mines in the island is unnoticed by any historian since the beginning of the Roman dominion, with the exception of Bede. It is certain that large sums in gold and silver were raised in the country on different occasions, and much coin or bullion repeatedly carried out of it; and it appears difficult to comprehend whence all this wealth could be obtained with so few manufactures and so little exportable produce of any kind. The early eminence of the Anglo-Saxons in the art of working gold and silver may be taken as another presumption that, whencesoever procured, there was no want of these metals in the island. 'We have undoubted proof,' says Mr Macpherson, 'that the English jewellers and workers of gold and

(2) Pictorial History of England, vol. i, p. 266.

ilver were eminent in their professions, and that probably as arly as the beginning of the seventh century. . . . So great was he demand for highly-finished trinkets of gold and silver, that he most capital artists of Germany resorted to England; and noreover, the most precious specimens of foreign workmanship vere imported by the merchants.'[3] On the other hand, articles in old and silver seem to have been the chief description of manu-actured goods exported from England in this period."[4]

(3) Macpherson, i, 290.
(4) Pict. Hist. of England, i, 269.

VII.

THE DANES:

1. THEIR ORIGIN.—2. THEIR WARLIKE DEEDS AND CHARACTER—3. THEIR RELIGION—4. THEIR POLITY.—5. THEIR LOVE AND MODE OF WAR.—6. THEIR MANNERS, CUSTOMS, AND OCCUPATIONS.—7. THEIR ARTS AND LANGUAGE.

1. The original of this extraordinary race is said to be of the very highest antiquity.[1] The Danes, Goths, Scythians or Getæ,—for so they are variously denominated,—are offshoots of that great primitive stock, which migrating westward, settled in the Scandinavian peninsula or in the Cimbrian chersonese (Jutland); and called this region *Danemarck*, from Dan, their first king. Another branch passed over from the coast of Asia Minor to the islands, and thence expatiated over the western continent. "By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations." GEN. x, 5. That the former branch originated from Northern Asia, there is a further proof, that the Danes, before they became known by this name, were called Cimbri; from the resemblance of which word to *Cimmerian*, we cannot doubt but that they sprang from the Cimmerian Scythians, whom the ancients place to the north of the Euxine and Caspian Seas.

2. But,—not to dilate upon antiquarian ethnography—though this piratical nation was known to their Southern enemies by the

(1) Hoc autem regnum est primum et vetustissimum regnum mundi. PET. OLAUS.

common appellation of Danes, their armaments were composed not merely of the natives of Denmark, but of all the tribes dwelling near the Baltic, and in Scandinavia. These predatory hordes were sometimes called also by the general term of Northmen, including all those numerous tribes, that issued, from time to time, from the north of Europe, whether Danes, Norwegians, Sweons, Jutes, Goths &c. Too populous for their own inhospitable clime, cultivating an ungrateful soil, destitute of arts, manufactures, and almost of commerce, they sought a home and sustenance in more favoured climes. Brigandage and piracy were their occupation, and as necessary to them, as carnage to wild beasts. Such adventurers, hardy, vigorous, brave, herculean in stature, and like their kindred the Saxons, having the same language, manners, habits, the same heathenish rites and superstitions, rude, cruel, indefatigable, and enterprising from necessity, would, under an able leader, prove indomitable; with the spirit of the old Romans, they were as numerous as the ancient Persians. For, how great soever their losses of life either by field or flood, yet, like the fabled hydra, they seemed to gain strength and courage from disaster and defeat; the warrior-sons of Thor and Woden were often vanquished, but never subdued. And in England, though they were, by the genius of Alfred, compelled to quit the kingdom (A. D. 879), after having been harassed, hunted, and almost exterminated by disease, famine, and the sword; yet in the reign of his successor, eleven years after, we find that "England was inhabited by an equal number of Saxons and Danes.[2]"

A Danish writer,[3] with a national vanity savouring more of romance and fiction than of truth and reality, gives a pompous enumeration of the regions and kingdoms subjugated by his warlike ancestors; these comprehend almost every part of the known world, even India, which is said to owe to one of their monarchs the blessing of Gospel light.[3] But such fables deserve to be mentioned, only to be ridiculed. For, whatever passed in Denmark, prior to the Christian era, is unknown to us, if we except the famous expedition of the Cimbri and Teutones, into Gaul.[4] This incident affords but a faint ray of light, which for a moment

(2) Pet. Olaus, who wrote in the 16th century.
(3) Id. (4) Mallet.

brightens ages of obscurity; short and transient however as it is, we gain an unerring glimpse at the character of this people.

2. The history of Rome informs us, that the ancient Danes were as formidable in their invasions by land, as their descendants proved by sea. Issuing from their forests, they spread like locusts over Gaul, and threatened Italy. But the Roman ambassadors, having remonstrated with them for having invaded the territories of their allies the Norici, the Cimbri—as they were then called, because they came from the Cimbrian peninsula chiefly—excused themselves by answering, that they knew not that the Norici were allies of the Romans, that they respected the Roman name and nation, and honoured martial valour even in an enemy; and with this apology, retired into Dalmatia, little apprehensive of hostilities especially from the Romans, upon whose vaunted good faith they relied. But they were suddenly attacked by a Roman consul. This outrage on the law of nations opened the flood-gates to a long and sanguinary war, most disastrous to the Romans, till their city was filled with grief and terror, so that many began to despair of the safety of the Republic. At length, the famous Marius, that most consummate general, was appointed to the conduct of the war, by whom the Cimbri, and the Teutones, their allies and a kindred race—another swarm from the great Northern hive,—were defeated, with the loss of 100,000 men, as Plutarch says, or according to others, of 200,000, and 70,000 prisoners, in a battle at Aquæ Sextiæ in Provence, and in the following year, of 120,000 slain, and 60,000 prisoners.[5] Other writers content themselves with affirming, that the number of the slain was incredible; and that the inhabitants of Marseilles, for a long time after, made enclosures for gardens and vineyards with their bones, and the soil in the suburbs was so saturated with blood, that its fertility was prodigious.[6] So highly appreciated were the victories of Marius, that there was bestowed on him the glorious title of the third founder of Rome.

From this incident, authenticated by the most veritable historian of Roman affairs, we learn that these Cimbri, or Danes, were the most formidable enemies the conquering Romans ever encountered.

(5) Aspen's Universal History.

(6) Sed et hostes terram Massiliensem, quam vivi vastaverant, mortui magno affecerunt commodo, nam ossa in sepes vinearum versa, tabo carnium ita pinguefacta arva sunt, ut nunquam largiori segete luxuriaverint. Liv. Epitome lib. 68, 31.

Their inexhaustible numbers, their uncommon prowess, tallness of stature, and unusual manner of fighting, and their former victories, overawed the veteran legions of Rome, whom nothing short of the vigour, discipline, and address of a general like Marius, could induce to face such an enemy.

This memorable expedition drew, for the time, the attention of Europe; but, as arts and literature alone can ensure lasting celebrity to a nation, and because men quickly forget those evils which they no longer fear, this torrent of an army had no sooner retired within its former bounds, than the Romans themselves lost sight of it; so that we scarcely find in their writers any further mention of these once formidable Cimbri. Strabo merely informs us, that they subsequently sought the friendship of Augustus Cæsar,—a proof of their fallen fortunes; and Tacitus, that their state was, in his day, inconsiderable, but their renown was as ancient as extensive.[6]

But redoubtable as the Danes were as warriors, and far and wide as they carried their arms, they never succeeded in founding an empire in foreign lands; they became amalgamated with hostile people; but never established an independent dominion. Though often victors in the field, they were never the conquerors of nations; for the true and permanent conqueror is he, who knows how to make laws for the vanquished, to administer a good policy, and to rule with equity and moderation; and such was the policy of the Romans, "Parcere subjectis," which gave them the dominion of the world. It was the Senate by its wisdom, not the Roman army by its prowess, that made them the lords of the earth. It is mind, not matter, sage counsel, not brute force, that gains a lasting ascendant. Arms abroad avail but little, unless there is wisdom at home. The Northmen, therefore, entirely ignorant of the arts of peace,—whose commanders were soldiers, whose object was plunder rather than glory,—had the means, but not the policy, to make themselves masters of Europe. In England they domineered for a while; but so intolerable was their yoke, that the overjaded English threw it off, and the kingdom reverted to the ancient Saxon line.

(6) Parva nunc civitas; sed gloria ingens, veterisque famæ late vestigia manent. Tac. Germ. c. 37.

Warriors they were; but no legislator or politician among them, till Rollo the Peaceable acquired the dominion of Neustria or Normandy, which he consolidated by a wise system of jurisprudence. Under such a head the Northmen were no longer pirates, but conquerors. We know with what inflexibility he dispensed justice. He abolished theft among his subjects, who had hitherto lived by rapine; and long after his death the very mention of his name was a summons to the officers of justice to run and suppress violence. He thus perpetuated his power and dynasty in France, over the fairest province of that kingdom for five centuries, and Duke William, treading in the steps of his renowned ancestor, became the conqueror and king of England, over which his posterity have reigned for eight hundred years.

The Danes have been by all historians stigmatised as a cruel people; and such a charge is more than probable. For nations, even the more civilized, whose chief occupation is warfare, becoming familiar with scenes of blood, are steeled against human suffering. It is not, then, surprising that a rude, stern race from a rugged climate, inured to hardship and danger both by land and sea, should be ferocious and sanguinary. Nothing can be more dreadful and revolting, than the manner in which these barbarians made their invasions; they spared neither age, sex, nor condition. One of their own chieftains, protesting against the custom of the soldiery,—that of tossing infants upon the points of their spears, acquired the nicname of Burnakal, or the Preserver of infants. But let us take their moral portraiture from our own historian Holinshed, who drew his facts from the most veracious sources: "So great was their lordliness, cruelty, and insatiable desire of riches, beside their detestable abusing of chaste matrons and young virgins (whose husbands and parents were daily enforced to become their drudges and slaves, whilst they sat at home and fed like drone bees, of the sweet of their travail and labours) that God would not suffer them to continue any while over us, but when He saw his time, he removed their yoke, and gave us liberty as it were to breathe us, thereby to see whether this his sharp scourge could have moved us to repentance and amendment of our lewd and sinful lives, or not. But when no sign thereof appeared in our hearts, he called in another nation to vex us, I mean the Normans, a people mixed with Danes, and of whom it is

worthily doubted whether they were more hard or cruel to our countrymen than the Danes, or more heavy and intolerable to our island than the Saxons or the Romans." (Vol. I, p. 6). This grave and sensible author (whose moral reflections are like apples of gold in pictures of silver) repeating the concurrent testimony of all our ancient Chroniclers, has however, like them, overlooked the cause of the inhumanity of the Northmen. This spirit was the dictate of religion, rather than the impulse of wantonness and barbarity; for they were taught, that human sacrifices were acceptable to their gods and to the manes of those slain in battle: accordingly, they always decimated their prisoners, putting every tenth captive to death by the most excruciating tortures.[7]

Tantum relligio potuit suadere malorum.

But, if their cruelty was great, their insolence was greater. "For if a Dane met an Englishman upon a bridge (says J. Brompton) the latter would not presume to stir a foot, until the Dane had crossed; nay further, if the English did not bow the head in honour of the Dane, they quickly felt the grievous punishment of stripes." "Hardecanute suffered the Danes to domineer to such a pitch, that every family through the kingdom had one Dane as the guard and master of the house, and thus (says H. Knyghton) they defloured our wives, daughters, and maid-servants, and inflicted many insults and indignities on our own countrymen, to the dishonour and disgrace of the English." And similar is the testimony of all our Chroniclers.

3. It is not easy to form a just idea of the religion of those tribes who occupied the North of Europe. What we find in Tacitus and others, is vague and uncertain. The only genuine source from which any clear views may be drawn hereon, is, that summary of Icelandish Mythology, called the Edda, the Bible of the northern heathens. Let us, then, taking this as our guide, examine this religion in its purity.[8] "He was the author of all that exists, the Eternal, the Ancient, the Living and Awful One, the Searcher-out of hidden things, the Immutable." To him are attributed "power infinite, knowledge without bounds, justice in-

(7) Sidon. l. VIII. Symmachus, l. II.

(8) Tacitus asserts that the Germans believed—what indeed reason teaches to all men—the being of a Supreme God, to whom all things were subject and obedient. "Regnator omnium Deus; cætera subjecta atque parentia. c. 85. And whatever is recorded concerning this people, is equally applicable (we repeat) to the Northmen.

corruptible."[9] "He is the Universal Father; He lives for ever; He governs all kingdoms, and directs great things as well as small. He hath formed the heavens, earth, and air; He hath made more than the sky and the earth; He hath made mankind, and given to him a soul that shall live and never be lost, even after the body shall have vanished into dust and ashes. And all just men shall dwell with Him in a place called Gimlee, i. e. the palace of peace and harmony; but the wicked shall go down to Hella or death; and thence to Nifhleim, which is below in the ninth world." This sublime doctrine is the sum of all natural religion, so far as mere reason can carry us, teaching the Unity of the Godhead, the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments. This religion forbids the representation of the Deity under any corporeal form, as derogatory to his greatness and also the confining within the walls of a temple, of Him who is Immensity, whose temple is the Universe, and whose altar is the whole earth: like the ancient Persians, and the Druids they consecrated to Him woods and groves, in the dark, silent and awful recesses of which they might contemplate the Deity seemingly present.[10]

But this pure fountain of worship at length became turbid and corrupt with the taint of idolatry and polytheism; the pure gold was alloyed and almost lost amidst the dross. For from this Great Supreme they drew, as it were emanations, an infinite host of inferior divinities. The sun, moon, stars, earth, water, trees, forests, rivers, mountains, thunder, and tempests had each its presiding deity or genius. And these are the chief traits of that ancient heathenism, common, in the earliest ages, to almost all the nations of Europe, and without doubt to many in Asia, even till the decline of the Roman republic, that is, till the dawning of Christianity. And such is the tendency of all religious systems, however pure their origin, and however enlightened their founders. For men are by nature so gross, weak, and carnal, so narrow in the ideas they form of their Creator, that they cannot conceive how that God, who fills immensity with his presence,

(9) This work has been translated by Mallet. See his Introduction to the Hist. of Denmark, pp. 48, 9.

(10) Cæterum ne cohibere parietibus Deos, neque in ullam humani oris speciem assimilare, ex magnitudine cœlestium, arbitrantur. Lucos ac nemora consecrant, Deorumque nominibus appellant secretum illud quod solâ reverentiâ vident. Tacit. Germ. c. 9.

whose centre is every where, can be present every where at the same moment; how He who made all things by the word of His mouth, can sustain and inform them by the same power; how that Being who is present to all, cannot but be attentive to all, and will, therefore, hear their prayers, and minister to their wants. Thus enveloped in a cloud of ignorance, they have had recourse in time of need, to what they imagined, like all nations ignorant of the nature of the true God, to be a more speedy, certain, and available help, and invoked a host of false deities and tutelar spirits, demons, or angels, to the general neglect of the only and true God. Hence His image being gradually effaced from their hearts, they drew the moral attributes of their imaginary divinities to the standard of their own character, as those who took delight in the display of courage in battle, and in the inflicting of vengeance, in carnage and desolation. And, as war was the dominant passion among the northern nations, before the arrival of Odin among them from Scythia, he became, from his prowess, cruelty, success in battle, and his powers as a magician, the very Being to their humours and habits. Appearing to them something superhuman, his apotheosis and that of his companions in arms, was the natural result. But what a God! instead of a merciful and just One, the maker and sustainer of heaven and earth; the Author of all good, the rewarder of the virtuous, we find him depicted in the Icelandish Mythology, as "the God of war, the terrible and severe God, the father of slaughter, the Depopulator; the Incendiary, the active and roaring Deity, he that giveth victory, who re-animates the combatants, who nameth those who are to be slain."

As this monster of humanity was the principal Deity, like the Jupiter of the Latins, so was Friga, or Frea, his wife the principal goddess. She became, in the sequel, the patroness of love and debauchery, the Venus of the North, and, like her prototype, passed for the principle of all fecundity—for the mother of all that exists. It was to her that women addressed themselves to obtain happy marriages and prosperous accouchments. She was the dispenser of sensual pleasures, repose, and voluptuousness.

The third in this monstrous Theology, was the redoubtable Thor, the God of Thunder. He was always represented as bearing

a massive club or mace, indicative of his immense strength. In these three Persons have we not a glimpse of the Heathen Trinity, denoting wisdom, love, and power? To this Deity they dedicated the fifth day of the week, Thor'sday, as to the Sun and Moon, the first and second; to Woden, the fourth, or Woden's-day, as Tuesday, to the God Tuisco, Friday, to Friga, and Saturday, to a divinity, called Soter. To another goddess, named Eoster, they dedicated the month of April, or that period of the year subsequent to the vernal Equinox, when the wind blows usually from the East; and was, therefore, favourable to their maritime enterprises.

But we refer the curious and learned, for more ample information upon this part of our subject, to the elaborate work of M. Pelloutier.[1] But as to the many popular fictions which their poets taught to the credulous people,—fictions sometimes ingenious, and oftener puerile, with which they sought to gloss over the pure and ancient religion,—we may not believe, that the intelligent portion of those nations looked upon them in any other light.

The manners and customs, as the religion of the Scandinavians, differed little from those of the Saxons; but in human sacrifices, the former were far more cruel. Ditmarus, an ancient bishop, writes thus: "Because I have heard wonderful reports of the ancient sacrifices of the Danes and Normans, I will not pass it by unnoticed. At certain seasons they assemble, and sacrifice, to their Gods, ninety-nine men, as many horses and dogs and cocks, instead of hawks, assuring themselves, that hereby their Gods are fully pleased and pacified.[2]" And not only the vulgar, but men of rank and quality were the victims, especially in times of great danger and extremity, thinking that the more noble the victim, the more appeasable will be the Gods. Nay, their very kings[3] were unspared. The first king of Wermland, a petty province in Sweden, was burnt in honour of Odin, to put an end to a great dearth; and kings, in their turn, spared not the blood of their subjects, or even of their children. For, Hacon king of Norway offered his own son, to obtain of Odin a victory over his enemy Harold[4]; and Anne, king of Sweden,

(1) Histoire des Celtes. (2) See also Camden and Speed.
(3) Wormius, in Monum. Danica and North Antiq. I, p. 134. (4) Saxo-Gram. l. X.

devoted to the same God the lives of nine sons, to prevail on him to prolong his life.[5] It is also reported that, when the inhabitants became too numerous, they selected the young men by lot, whom they drove forth like bees from a hive, to possess themselves of settlements in a foreign land, by the sword. While sending forth these emigrants, they offered human sacrifices for the success of the enterprise, deeming them the most precious and acceptable of all burnt-offerings to their sovereign God Thor.[6] But the true cause of these emigrations may have arisen not so much from scarcity of food and poverty of soil,—for the earth, even in such a rugged climate, is ever bountiful and rewards those who cultivate her,—as from the roving, restless, and adventurous spirit of the people, and the desire of winning the lands of others by the glory of the sword, rather than, by the drudgery of the plough, of cultivating their own.

In the catalogue of their various superstitions stand foremost Witchcraft, and Divinations by lots and augury. "Auspicia sortesque ut qui maxime observant," says Tacitus. These may be, in some degree, palliated, since the former, a system of knavery and delusion, was rife all over Europe long after the period of the Reformation, and in England was not wholly extinct even at the opening of the last century; the latter was prevalent among the enlightened Greeks and Romans. Their divination by lots was simple, and was performed by cutting slips of wood from a fruit-bearing tree, which were distinguished by various marks, or notches. These they jumbled in a white bag. Then, the priest, if it was a public occasion, or the father of a family, if private, implored the favour of their Gods; and raising his eyes to heaven, took up one slip three times successively, and prognosticated good or evil, according to the marks fortuitously presented. Future events were divined not only by the flight and singing of birds, but by the neighing of horses, which they considered as the ministers of the Gods, and these were fed in woods and groves at the public expense. But the circumstances, from which they drew their surest presages touching the issue of a war, was the decision by a single combat between one of

(5) Wormius, I, p. 28.

(6) Dudo de St Quentin.—Deorum maxime Mercurium colunt, qui certis diebus humanis quoque hostiis litare fas habent. Tacit. Germ. c. 9.

their own champions and a captive of the nation, against which they had commenced hostilities.[7]

But amid all this dross we discover in their creed, according to the Edda, some grains of pure gold: notwithstanding the corruptions which subsequent ages introduced among them, (as we have already seen) they believed in that sublime and sacred doctrine, which reason, no less than revelation teaches,—the immortality of the soul. But even this belief was debased and alloyed by the notions and vagaries of a sensual Paradise, and, like the Mahometans, they thought that perfect bliss awaited those who fell on the battle-field. "The Cimbri are gay and courageous;[8] they leap for joy in battle; and rejoice, when they are about to quit life in so glorious a cause; but in sickness and old age they lament, fearing a shameful and inglorious death." "Surely, says Lucan, this people of the north are happy in their delusion! for the fear of death, the greatest dread to mankind, troubles them not; and thus they are ready to rush on the sword, and their souls to embrace death, thinking it the part of a coward to spare a life which they shall soon recover." Read the words of the original:

"Certe populi quos despicit Arctos
Felices errore suo! quos ille timorum
Maximus haud urget lethi metus; inde ruendi
In ferrum mens prona viris, animæque capaces
Mortis, et ignavum redituræ parcere vitæ."

LUCAN, LIB. I.

In fine, their religion, as attaching to the profession of arms eternal salvation and happiness, wrought these deluded men to the highest pitch of euthusiasm for a military life. Neither fatigue, dangers, nor torments could moderate this passion, which was to be crowned with so lasting and blissful a recompense. Such was that happy futurity, the prospect of which rendered the inhabitants of northern Europe so intrepid, not merely defying, but courting, death. King Regner,[9] when on the eve of dissolution, far from uttering groans or complaints, expressed his joy in these verses: "We are hewn in pieces by the sword; but this fills me with joy, when I think of the feast preparing for me in

(7) Smollett's England.
(8) Val. Maximus, II. c. 6.
(9) Mallet, I, p. 121.

Odin's palace. There quietly seated in the splendid habitations of the gods, we shall drink beer out of the skulls of our enemies. A brave man fears not to die. I shall utter no timorous words, as I enter the hall of Odin." And again: "What is the happy portion of the brave, but to fall in the midst of arrows? he that flies from wounds, drags out a tedious, miserable life. The dastard feels no heart in his bosom."[10] Thinking as they did every kind of death ignominious, but one of a violent nature, no wonder that the Northmen should have made war the only honourable profession, and carried valour to such extravagant excesses. Death, to the soldier at least, had no terror; he could approach it without dismay. A warrior, who was wasting by a lingering sickness, would shorten an inglorious life by a glorious death, desiring to be carried to the battle to die by the enemy's hand. Others slew themselves; many procured this melancholy service at the hands of friends, who considered this sort of voluntary murder as a sacred duty, deeming that a happy exchange, which gave them happiness and repose for ever, instead of a life of mourning, misery, disquiet, and danger.

To such a misguided race constant warfare was, we repeat, not at all strange; however strange to a man who reasons coolly as a Christian. It is but as yesterday, that mankind began to be sensible of the blessings of peace, of the advantage of cultivating the arts, industry, and commerce. The farther we look back into history, we discover mankind to be more engaged in war, divided among themselves for no cause, and unnaturally bent upon each other's destruction, from a spirit of revenge, or jealousy, of plunder or fanaticism. Three thousand years ago the face of Europe presented the same spectacle as three hundred years ago did the forests of America, viz, a thousand petty wandering tribes, without cities, towns, or even homes, without agriculture, arts, commerce, and therefore property, except a few herds and huts, or what they gained by pillage, harassing each other by inroads, attacks, fire and sword, sometimes conquering, sometimes conquered, preying like wild beasts upon each other; nay, worse than these; for the beasts abstain from their kind; but no creature more cruel than man to his fellow-man. In such a state of rapine and mischief, life being so precarious, has but few charms.

(10) Extract from five Runic Odes published by Dodsley.

Life is a real blessing to him alone, who knows and feels the pleasures of domesticity, the enjoyment of property, society, kindred, of the fruits of industry, the protection of laws, and who has a relish for those arts that soften our manners, embellish life, and endear us to it.

4. The character of the ancient northern nations we have attempted, in some measure, to develope. The government and laws of those obscure countries are to us little known. Scarcely does any author of note and authority throw any light upon their polity, except Tacitus, in his short, but masterly Treatise upon the manners of the ancient Germans, in which he has comprised the most prominent traits of the people of that vast country. What he has recorded concerning their polity, is a morsel too precious, not to be here translated entire: "In the election of their kings, they have a regard to their birth, of their chiefs, to their virtue or merit.[1] Affairs of minor interest are decided by the grandees; but those of importance, by the general assembly of the people. They have certain days of assembling; and, when the king or chief has given his opinion, each speaks in turn, according as he is eminent for valour, birth, or understanding, but deference is paid rather to reason than to the individual. If they disapprove his opinion, they signify so by a murmur; if they approve, they make a noise by clashing their spears; for they always resort to their assemblies, clad in armour. And to clash their arms, is deemed the most respectful way of confessing assent or conferring praise. . . . . "

"It is in these assemblies also, that criminals are tried and punished. Here too are elected those magistrates, who are to dispense justice through the towns and villages, and each delegate takes with him a hundred persons, to assist him by their authority and advice. . . . The king's grandeur consists in seeing himself surrounded by a brave and numerous youth, who are to him an ornament in peace, a security in war. . . When they come to the combat, it is dishonourable for the king not to be foremost in the action; and the people make a vow, to follow him every where, and defend him. His glory is the end and aim of their noblest exploits; and it is an indelible infamy to survive

(1) Reges ex nobilitate, duces ex virtute sumunt. &c.

him in the battle; for the prince fights for victory, and they, for the prince. . . . The public, as also individuals, make presents to the prince, as well out of the revenue of their lands as of their flocks,—a custom which is a source of profit and a token of esteem to him, and the Prince, on his part, bestows on those who fight for him either a war-horse or a victorious and bloody lance. . . . Nor is the power of the kings free and unlimited. . . . The leaders set an example of valour, rather than give orders. If these are foremost and conspicuous in the field, they are held in esteem and admiration. . . . Illustrious descent and the merits of their fathers entitle even striplings (adolescentulos) to the monarch's favour. And, as these advance in age, other youthful warriors attach themselves to the prince's retinue. . . . They have different ranks according to the judgment of the chief; and, among his followers (comites) is the highest emulation, who shall stand foremost in his favour; and the princes are equally emulous, who shall have the most numerous and most valiant in their train. This is their dignity, this their strength, to be surrounded by a choice company of young men. Thus formidable, they are courted by embassies, and honoured by presents; and the mere terror of their name often averts a war.[2] . . . If there be no employment for the warriors at home, they voluntarily resort to other nations engaged in war. For to retain them in his service, the prince has no other resource than war. And they would rather challenge the enemy and serve for wounds, (mereri vulnera) than plough the soil and wait for the produce. Nay, it appears to them the part of a dastard to earn by the sweat of the brow what a man can acquire by the glory of the sword."

This valuable little treatise of the sententious Historian,—the most prominent points in which are given in the above desultory extracts,—is a most faithful epitome of the religion, polity, manners, customs, and habits of the inhabitants of Germany, no less than of Northern Europe, prior and subsequent to the Christian age. In it we discover the character, especially, of the ancient Gothic form of government. Here we see kings of illustrious descent, presiding over rather than ruling a free people. Here we discern the nucleus of the British Constitution, which came forth originally from the forests of Germany. Here we behold a

(2) Et ipsa plerumque fama bella profligavit.

brave and independent nation, assembling at certain times, and making resolutions in their own persons (as we by our representatives) on all affairs of importance, enacting laws, deciding on peace or war, concluding alliances, dispensing justice, appointing magistrates, and deliberating on the public weal. We trace here the outline of a House of Peers, or what in other European States was styled "The Grand Council," the General Assembly, &c. with an exception that the monarchies of modern Europe are hereditary, not elective,—an improvement, perhaps, upon the antient polity. We discover moreover, in the same, the origin of the feudal system. For though Tacitus informs us, that eminent services were rewarded by the gift of a horse or lance, in the earlier times; yet, when territorial acquisitions were increased by conquest, such services were requited by donations of a more substantial character, by grants of conquered lands on military tenure.

In effect, we recognize in these swarms of Germans and Scandinavians a host of savage warriors, who seemed born only for ravage and destruction, changed into an orderly and politic community, as soon as they had confirmed their conquests, infusing into their institutions a spirit of equity and justice, electing for kings such of their princes, as they judged most deserving of the crown, dividing between those kings and the whole nation the exercise of the sovereign power; reserving to the general assemblies the making of laws, and deciding public measures; and lastly, to give solidity to the powers essential to a limited monarchy, assigning certain privileges to the several orders of the State.

Our often-quoted Historian further states, that the Germans had among them four classes or ranks, the hereditary nobles (ingenui,) the nobles by election, the freemen, and slaves. These orders subsisted among the Danes also, according to Adam Bremensis;[3] and other authors speak to the same effect of the Saxons, as well those, who with the Angles settled in England, as those who settled in Germany.[4] The first class were those, who, by their very extraction and independently of the royal favour, were reputed noble. Among the second were comprised, besides the nobles properly so called, all those who held great offices at court, or in the provinces, as senators, governors,

(3) See Mallet, p. 111. (4) Id.

directed to the same end; dangers were always mixed up with amusements.[6] These consisted in taking perilous leaps, climbing the steepest rocks, fighting naked with deadly weapons, and in wrestling; so that it was not uncommon to see them, at fifteen years, robust full-grown men, qualified for a vigorous combat. It was also at this age, that they were emancipated from tutelage, when a buckler, sword, and lance were formally presented to them. This ceremonial was performed in some public assembly, in which the father, or, in his default, the nearest of kin, publicly armed the young warrior. "This" says Tacitus "was his toga virilis, his taking his station in society; before this, he was part of a family; now he is become a member of the state." After this, he was required to provide for himself by the chace, or by inroads upon an enemy. Especial care, too, was taken to prevent the youthful citizen from too early a commerce with the sex, till his limbs had acquired all the vigour, of which they were susceptible. He could never hope to make his way into the hearts of the fair, but by the road of war and arms. Those mothers, whose children were generally born in the midst of camps, military sports, combats real or imaginary, and the effusion of blood, were not likely to enervate their offspring by too much tenderness and indulgence; so that their very infancy was imbued with the warlike spirit of their sires and the stern temper of the mothers.

Their offensive weapons[7] were the sword, the battle-axe, a bow and arrows. The first of these was short, curved generally like a scymitar, and hung from a little belt, that passed over the right shoulder: sometimes they wore a long straight weapon, that bore a different name; the former being called Sword, the latter, Spade or Spada,—a word found in almost all the languages of Europe. And these the Cimbri used.[8] The heroes or champions took especial care to have very keen swords, which they ornamented with mysterious characters, and to which they gave such names as might inspire terror. The battle-axe had two edges. Besides these ordinary arms, these fierce warriors made use at their pleasure, of other implements, such as they deemed best adapted to second their valour; and accordingly, we find mention

(6) Mallet, p. 128.
(7) Dalin, Hist. I. 1. p. 8.
(8) Plutarch.

made of javelins, slings, clubs stuck with sharp points,[9] lances, and a sort of poignard. In their defensive armour was no less variety; of which the buckler was the principal, and this was usually of wood, bark, or leather. That of the warrior of distinction was of iron or copper, painted or embossed, often gilt, and sometimes they were plated even with gold or silver. And the shields were not only the principal instruments of defence in war, but served for various other purposes also; they were used for carrying the dead to the grave, to terrify the enemy by clashing their swords or spears against them, to form occasionally coverings or a kind of tents, when they were encamped in the field in bad weather. And in naval encounters they were of no less utility; for, if the fear of falling into the enemy's hands obliged any man to throw himself into the sea, he might save himself by floating upon his buckler.[10] Lastly, a rampart was made of the shields, by locking them firmly together, so as, on emergency, to form an impregnable barrier against the enemy's assaults. Sometimes too they were arranged into a sort of stage or platform, upheld on the heads of the soldiers, upon which the general standing, harangued his army on the open plain. This useful implement, serving for such a variety of purposes, was, at the end of the campaign on their return home, hung against the walls of their houses, as the most noble ornament, with which they could be decorated.

The casque or helmet was made out of various materials, according to the rank of the wearer. That of the private was of leather generally; that of the officer, of iron, and, if his means would allow, of gilt copper. The coat of mail and other parts less essential were worn by those only, who could procure them.

They did not carry to great perfection the science of fortification, and attacking places of defence, in those rude times when war, as a science, was not understood. Their fortresses were castles, situated usually upon the summit of rocks, and strengthened by rudely built walls; which, surrounding the fortress in an irregular fashion, were often called by a name that signifies a Serpent or Dragon. In these, ladies of distinction, especially those renowned

(9) The two gigantic figures in the Guildhall of London, vulgarly called Gog and Magog, are doubtless representations of Scythian or Danish warriors.

(10) Holberg's Danemark, c. XIII.

for extraordinary beauty, were not unfrequently immured for safety, in those lawless times, when so many desperadoes were wandering up and down, in quest of adventures.[1] It is needless to add, that it was this practice that gave occasion to the Romancists (who knew not how to describe common events in plain terms, but glossed over their stories with figment and fable) of imagining so many prodigies about princesses of transcendant beauty being guarded by furious and fiery dragons, and of young knights who could not succeed in rescuing them, until they had flung to the ground those terrible defenders. These rude forts were commonly taken by surprise, or after they had sustained a long blockade. If however, the fort was of great importance, terraces were raised in the elevated part of the fort, whence the besiegers hurled arrows, stones, boiling water, melted pitch or lead, which the besieged were, on their part, not slow in returning. There is reason to suppose, that the use of catapultæ and balistæ, engines for discharging great stones and darts, was formerly known in the north; but probably they were rare and of rude construction.[2]

How formidable soever were the ancient Danes and Norwegians to their neighbours and distant nations by land, it must, notwithstanding, be confessed that the watery element was the true theatre of their glory. By their maritime expeditions they terrified and ravaged Europe; and of all the northern swarms that covered the sea with their fleets, the Saxons were the most numerous and formidable. An author, who wrote in the fifth century,[3] gives a frightful picture of the inroads, descents, and devastations of this turbulent race. "The Saxon pirates have not only a knowledge of, but a familiarity with, the dangers of the sea . . . an enemy more truculent than any enemy; he attacks unexpectedly; he escapes unobserved; he despises those who oppose him, and lays prostrate those off their guard." Just as is this character of the Saxons, it may, with far stronger reason, be applied to their Danish neighbours.

But to the cruelty and tyranny of the Saxons, the Danes added a rigorous exaction of annual tribute, called *Danegelt*, but by the Saxons Heregeld, i. e. a military and naval impost which was

(1) Dalin, l. I. c. 7. 20. (2) Idem.

(3) Sidon. Apoll. lib. VIII, epist. 6.

begun to be collected about the reign of Ethelred, anno 990, as some writers suppose, 'ob pacandos Danos patriam infestantes,' or according to others, for hiring Danish and other soldiers, or mariners, to oppose the incursions of foreign invaders. But we adhere to the opinion of Sir H. Spelman, who describes this tax to be "a tribute imposed on the English, sometimes for pacifying the Danes, sometimes for keeping them off the island," and a little after, "an annual tribute of 8000 pounds, was wrung out of the people." [4] It was originally an annual tax of two shillings on every hide of land in the kingdom; and was in its nature a land-tax, and the first of that kind, mentioned by our historians. But this, like many other imposts, retained its name, after it became appropriated to uses entirely different. Mr Tate reckons the number of hides in England [5] to have amounted to 246,000; consequently, the gross income of the tax was £24, 600; an estimate coinciding with that of Spelman, nearly; if we take the pound weight Troy, usually valued at three pounds sterling. The Author of the "Dialogue on the Exchequer" makes the subjoined comment upon this odious and extortionate impost: "Our island, content with its own riches and blessings, needs not those of the foreigner. This country, therefore, was justly called by our ancestors,

Divitiisque sinum, deliciisque larem—
The lap of riches, and the home of joys.

On this account, it sustained innumerable injuries at the hands of foreigners; for it is written, things valuable entice the thief. And so, pirates from the circumjacent countries made inroads upon and laid waste the maritime parts, carrying off gold, silver, and other valuables. But, when the king at the head of the natives prepared for a vigorous defence of the land, these intruders fled by sea. Among these, the principal and those more inclined to do mischief were that warlike and populous nation, who, besides the avarice common to robbers, were more frequent and formidable in their attacks, because they made some claim, by an ancient right, to the sovereignty of the kingdom, as the History of the Britons more fully relates. Therefore, to keep off these enemies, it was enacted by the English kings, that for every hide

(4) Spelman's Glossary, p. 181.

(5) Camden's Brit. I. 226; and Spelman's Gloss., p. 292.

of land two shillings be paid as a perpetual tax, for the service of warlike men, who were to guard the sea-coasts and be a check on the enemy's attacks."

6. The extravagant love of war among the ancient Scandinavians, is the prominent feature in their character. Their prejudices, customs, daily occupations, and amusements, in short, the whole tenor of their life, took a colouring and bias from this passion. The greater part of their existence was spent in the camp, or on board the fleet, in actual warfare, or in preparation for it. They had constantly reviews, sham fights which often proved serious encounters, and other military diversions; and, even when forced to live in peace, the representations of war were their liveliest entertainment; while hunting, the discussion of public affairs, drinking and sleeping, and the pleasures of the table occupied the rest of their time.[6] The bravest and the most active consigned the care of the house and family to women, old men, or the infirm. "The same people, by a strange contradiction, cannot live in inactivity, and yet love idleness."[7]

Like the modern English, they had the highest zest for the festive board. Among them was no public assembly, no civil or religious festival, no birth-day, marriage, or funeral duly solemnized, no friendship or alliance was properly cemented, in which feasting did not form the chief part.[8] The plentiful tables of the grandees were the wages of their dependents. A great lord could not more effectually succeed in drawing around him a great number of followers, than by giving magnificent and frequent repasts. At table they deliberated upon political matters, on war, peace, &c. and on the following day, reviewed what had been concluded upon the previous evening, thinking that a proper season for taking a man's opinion, when his heart, cheered and laid open by the copious and generous bowl, is free from disguise and dissimulation, and for taking his resolution, when he is cool and sober. At those carousals beer or mead was the usual beverage, or wine, when they could procure it. These were drunk from earthern or wooden pitchers, or from the horns of wild bulls, with which

(6) Quotiens bella non ineunt, multum venatibus, plus per otium transigunt, dediti somno ciboque. Tacit. Germ. c. 15.

(7) Id. c. 2.

(8) Pelloutier, I. b. 2, c. 12.

their forests abounded. And, as the guests drank one after the other, he who was the first to drink, said, *I drink before you, and I wish this draught may do you as much good as myself;* whereby he gave a kind of assurance, that he had infused neither poisons nor sorcery into the cup. Hence arose the custom of drinking to the health of the guests; as well as that of drinking to the memory of the departed; which is evidently a relic of the Celtic superstition of drinking to the manes of kings, heroes, and friends.[9]

Though the minds of these rough warriors were engrossed by the pursuit of arms and the pleasures of the table, they were yet especially susceptible of the tender passion, which is the strongest of ties, and the greatest charm of society. But in this particular as in many others, the Northmen of Europe were differently affected to the Southerns and Asiatics. The latter seem to have for the sex much sensual passion, but little esteem; among the former, on the contrary, they were less regarded as the means of sensual gratification, than as companions and equals, whose regard as well as favours could be procured only by attention, generous conduct, and a display of courage: an inference that these rude warriors had a high sense of honour and regard for female virtue. He who had played his part well in the field of Mars, had commonly the same success in the court of Venus. It was for his mistress, no less than for his king and country, that the youthful warrior fought. Patriotism led him to the field; but love nerved his arm. This spirit of chivalry was diffused through Europe, engendering that moderation and generosity of the stronger towards the weaker sex, which is to this day one of the chief characteristics of modern manners, so little known among ancient nations. So great was the respect of the Germans, according to Tacitus,[10] for women, that they admitted them to their councils; being of opinion that there is in the sex a certain forecast, almost prophetic; and so they were careful of disregarding their counsels, or neglecting their answers.[1] And the same sentiments prevailed among the Scandinavians generally. The husbands were

(9) Heroum, regum, amicorum, et in bello fortiter gerentium, memoriales scyphos exhauriebant, quibus eorum manibus parentare se credebant. Wormius apud Bartholin. p. 127.

(10) Germ. c. 8.

(1) See Keysler's Dissertation, De mulieribus fatidicis veterum Celtarum, gentiumque Septentrionalium.

almost inseparable from the wives; taking them in their company on the most distant expeditions, listening to the female monitions with respect, and, in defeat, fearing their reproaches as much as the blows of the enemy.

But this ascendancy of woman is easily explicable. Knowledge is power; the men, being mostly employed in war or the chace, left to their partners or daughters, the more leisurely task of acquiring divers branches of useful knowledge. These acquirements caused them to be regarded by the males as oracles in civil or domestic matters. It was the female alone, that studied the properties of simples, and the art of healing wounds; [2] an art as mysterious in those days, as the want of it was frequent.

There was also another consideration, which mutually bound the sexes by stronger ties of esteem and affection. In an age when piracies and a thirst for dangers and adventures, exposed weakness to unforeseen insults and attacks, the women had often occasion for deliverance from captivity, and always for defenders. And all know, that nothing is so likely to win the affections of a timid female, as her conviction that her lover is able and willing to protect her. Therefore, every young warrior, who was greedy of glory, and had a heart to dispose of, would fly to the rescue, would encounter every danger by flood and field, with the prospect of so just and sweet a reward, as the hand and heart of his beloved. Besides, our admiration and esteem for any object, is always redoubled, when it has cost us great exertions. How honourable and happy must alliances have been in a society thus constituted! And emulation would quickly multiply the number of such gallant cavaliers; chivalry became the mode; and woman was looked upon as little inferior to a divinity.

But, as young men, at least those of condition, could not arrive at honourable marriages, but through the road of honour and glory, we infer, that they did seldom marry at an early age. Cæsar says of the Germans—and what is said of this nation, is we repeat equally applicable to those dwelling to the north of them, —"that the longer the men continue in celibacy, the more they are esteemed;" and Tacitus, that "the Germans retain their vigour

(2) Scire potestates herbarum, usumque medendi. Virgil, Æn. 12, 396.

longer by deferring their union with the other sex." But polygamy prevailed among the Danes, even after their conversion to Christianity ;[3] it was not uncommon for them to espouse two wives, and often more. Rich and powerful men considered a plurality of wives as a mark of grandeur ; a vice this, which Christianity, not without great difficulty, triumphed over, but not till the end of the tenth century. The children had an equal right of succession ; and the title of bastard was applied to those only, born without any sort of marriage. Nevertheless, one of the wives, generally the most beloved, enjoyed a certain pre-eminence, being regarded as the most legitimate; and her prerogative consisted in following her deceased husband to the tomb or funeral pile, to be there interred or burnt with him,—a prerogative which would not make her an object of envy or jealousy to the ladies of our own age! But their fidelity and chastity were ever in repute ; Tacitus affirms,[4] that adulteries were very rare among the Germans ; and this crime was punished with the utmost severity. Marriages were, therefore, commonly fruitful among them ; but awful is the fact, that the rich, no less than the poor, scrupled not to expose to death such of their children, as they had no mind to rear. This barbarous custom was not uncommon among the Greeks and Romans also, long before they enjoyed prosperity, luxury, and the arts. So true is it, that ignorance is no security against vice, and men always know enough to conceive crimes.

It is no less remarkable, on the other hand, that, long before the light of Christianity penetrated the dark North, a sort of Baptism was there celebrated. Snorro Sturleson the chronicler, speaking of a Norwegian nobleman,[5] who lived under Harald Harfagre, affirms, that he poured water upon the head of a newborn infant, and called him Haguin after the father's name. It is probable, that the object of this ceremony was, to counteract the effects of conjuration and witchcraft, which evil spirits were supposed to employ at the moment of birth.[6] The Livonians, as well as the Germans, observed a similar rite, as we learn from the Letter of the celebrated pontiff Gregory the third to the apostle Boniface (Epist. 122.), wherein he directs him how to act in this

(3) Mallet. (4) Germ. c. 19.
(5) Historia Regum Septentrionalium ante sæcula, &c. 70.
(6) Mallet.

particular. And another author of note, in a learned comment upon the subject of Baptism among the heathens, tells us that the rite certainly existed before the introduction of Christianity, and that Pilate's washing his hands before the multitude, was a kind of exemplification of it.

We have already touched upon the education of the Scandinavian youth, of their hardihood, and the hardships to which they were inured. But we must not omit to speak, of the great advantage they gained from it, I mean, an iron constitution, vigorous health, and matchless strength of body. Both Greek and Latin writers have never spoken but with astonishment of the great size and proportionate muscular powers of the Northmen. Cæsar has a similar remark upon the Suevi, a warlike nation dwelling between the Elbe and the Vistula: he says that they feed on milk, that they hunt much, and from the earliest age they do nothing against their will; and are therefore so robust and enormous in stature: a wise people! who practised none of that restraint and compulsion, with us miscalled discipline, so prejudicial to both mind and body. And Vegetius, who wrote on military tactics, says positively, that the tallness of the Germans gave them a great advantage over the diminutive stature of the Romans. Their lances, swords, and other arms, which have been preserved from those ages, are objects of curiosity and astonishment to mankind in these degenerate times. It is doubtless this uncommon strength and stature of the human race in former ages, that have given rise and credit to rumours so common in all countries, that giants were the first inhabitants of the earth. The cold, formerly in Europe much more rigorous than now-a-days, continual bodily exercise, the continence of the men, and their late marriages, their simple diet, and especially their freedom from mental application (than which nothing so much obstructs muscular development) were the principal causes of these surprising instances of animal growth.

Among the Scandinavians the marriage ceremony was simple, and consisted chiefly in feasting.[7] The suitor, after having obtained the consent of the parents or guardian of the damsel, as well as her own, fixed the wedding-day, assembled his relations

(7) Dalin, Hist. I, c. 9.

and friends, and sent some of the latter, to receive the dower and the bride, in his name, from the hands of her father. The friends were answerable for what was entrusted to them, and if they abused that trust the law condemned them to make amends in a sum threefold greater than was awarded for a murder. The damsel's father or guardian followed her into the husband's house, and giving her into his hands, usually addressed to him these words: 'I give you this damsel in honorable matrimony, to share your bed, to have the keeping of the keys of the house, and a third of whatever money you possess or shall possess, and to enjoy other rights determined by the law.' After this the newly married pair sat at table with the guests, who drank to their health, and to their gods and heroes. Then, the friends of the bride raised and carried her on their shoulders, a custom among the Goths used as a mark of esteem, and still not wholly obsolete in our own country. The bride was conducted to the nuptial couch by her father; and before her was borne a number of flambeaux,—an usage common also among the Greeks and Romans, and which is not yet abolished in some countries of the north. The marriage, after this, was deemed consummated; the husband subsequently made divers presents to the wife, as a pair of oxen for the plough, a horse with fine trappings, together with a lance and sword.[8] And however inappropriate such gifts may appear, they were not without their meaning. "It was (says Tacitus) to intimate that she was not to lead a luxurious and idle life, but was called upon to be a partaker of her husband's labours, to be the companion of his dangers whether in peace or war. The wives also, on their part, gave armour. These mutual tokens were the conjugal bond, the mystic rites, their hymeneals."[9] The armour, if the husband had made a right use of it, was religiously preserved, given with the portions of their daughters, and transmitted as heir-looms to their posterity. Finally, after some days spent in feasts and diversions, the guests made presents of some cattle to the young pair, to commence housekeeping; and returned to their homes.

It was to the extraordinary vigour of their constitution, that the Scandinavians owed that healthy and extreme old age, which

(8) Mallet's Introd. pp. 207, 8.

(9) Hoc maximum vinculum, hæc arcana sacra, hos conjugales deos arbitrantur. Tac. Germ. c. 18.

many of them enjoyed. Yet this advantage they regarded only with indifference, or even with disdain, upon which men generally set so high a value, especially since the invention of so many arts and pleasures to render life more desirable. For few of the northern people awaited that term which nature had allotted them; deeming old age inglorious, they courted death by single combats, general wars, the dangers and fatigues of the sea, and even by suicide so frequent among them; they were eager to quit the world, and to enter upon that glorious route, which alone led to a happy futurity. The influence which this strange persuasion had on them, cannot be more plainly seen, than in the last scenes of their lives, and in their funeral ceremonies.

In the more ancient times these were simple. The Scandinavians, before the arrival of Odin among them, were content with depositing the body of the defunct under a heap of earth or stones, together with his arms. But this prince introduced into the North new customs, and attended with some magnificence.

In the ages which followed his settlement in Denmark, funeral piles were customary, as was before said, on which the body of the dead was reduced to ashes. These being collected in an urn were buried under an artificial hillock. But this usage was never absolutely universal, and the former was introduced anew, five or six centuries after, as far as can be conjectured. However, in every age, when princes or heroes had perished gloriously in battle, all possible magnificence was put in requisition, to pay to their shades the last offices, in a manner worthy of his rank and merits. On the pile was placed whatever he had held most dear in life, his arms, gold, silver, war-horse, and domestics. Even his dependants and friends thought it an honour and a duty to die with him, and accompany him to Odin's Hall. For nothing appeared to these warriors more glorious, than to enter their sensual Paradise, with a numerous cortege of slaves, friends, horses, accoutred in the finest armour, and clad in the richest robes. For Odin himself had assured them, that whatever had been burnt or interred with the dead, would accompany them to the Walhalla or Region of the Blest. And even the poorest, under this persuasion, carried with them, at least, their most necessary

(10) Mallet p. 212.

utensils and some money, in order not to be wholly unprovided in the other world. It was from a motive somewhat similar, that the Greeks and Romans put a piece of money into the mouth of the deceased, that he might have wherewith to pay his passage-money over the river Styx. And the Laplanders now inter with the departed a flint and steel and other apparatus, to light them along that dark road, which leads to the region of spirits.

Now, if polished nations have many observances wherein they differ but little from a rude people, it is especially in those which relate to religion, death, and their future destiny. Men cannot contemplate this awful subject coolly, and without falling into such hopes and fears, doubts, and desires, as leave to them scarcely the use of their reason. Accordingly, whatever Egypt, Greece, or Rome,—peoples otherwise so sage—taught upon this mysterious future, was it not a continual delirium, a day-dream, mere romancing, and old wives' tales—which will appear no whit better than the fables of the Celts and Scandinavians, if indeed it was not more indecent, revolting, and extravagant?

Whatever riches were interred with the dead, were said to be under the especial guardianship of Odin, who forbade any trespasses of profane avarice upon the sacred tomb: such depositories were held in the highest sanctity, therefore, and remained inviolate. In the north of Germany such tombs have been frequently discovered, containing arms, spurs, rings, and vases of much value. Mallet records an instance of a grave opened at Guben [1] in Lusatia; which, as may be inferred from its contents, inclosed the remains of one, who had been a great lover of good cheer: for he had been careful to carry with him to Odin's banqueting-room various utensils of cookery, with flagons and drinking cups of much cost and beauty: "In pago, uno milliari a Gubena distante, universus apparatus culinarius erutus est, cacabi, ollæ, catini, phialæ, patinæ, urceoli, lagenulæ, &c." No doubt, this gourmand and votary of Bacchus was resolved to make his entrée into the unknown region with the highest mirth and jollity, and to have a jovial feast with Odin and his boon companions; being of the same opinion as the Platonists of old, to whom were perpetuated after death, those luxuries and pleasures, which formed the

(1) Vide Keysler, antiq. select. p. 173.

summum bonum of their happiness, while living: according to the words of the poet:

> Quæ gratia currum
> Armorumque fuit vivis, quæ cura nitentes
> Pascere equos, eadem sequitur tellure repostos.
> VIRG. ÆN. VI. 653—5.

7. A people, who neglect the refined and agreeable arts, will cultivate but indifferently the necessary ones. The Scandinavians held both the one and the other in equal contempt. War absorbed every other pursuit. So long as this passion was in full force, whole tribes wandering from forest to forest, and subsisting, like the Scythians, upon the flocks they carried with them, scarcely thought of tillage; indeed, they disdained such drudgery. But this prejudice gradually wore out, probably from necessity. For Christianity having at length triumphed over their fondness for piracy, and restored to Denmark a part of its inhabitants, they were compelled to continue at home, and to draw their subsistence from the soil, especially as other fruits were so rare among them, and the consumption of grain was so large both for food and beverage. But the same necessity did not reconcile them to the other arts, which were still looked upon as degrading occupations, fitting for slaves only. Gauls, Germans, and Scandinavians employed none but slaves, freedmen, women, and old men in handcraft trades, works of drudgery, and domestic service. Thus, they knew but little of what contributes to luxury and refinement, the mechanic arts being in the hands of the lower ranks of society. Gross and sensual, and priding themselves on their animal powers alone, they exerted these, to the neglect of the mental; as indolent in peace, as they were active in war. The women spun the wool, of which part of their garments were made, and skins and furs supplied the rest.[2] These habits fitted tight to the body and were short and neat, like those of the Gothic nations. In this attire are discernible the rudiments of the modern European costume. It consisted of a kind of waistcoat and breeches or rather trowsers, which came down to the feet and tied at the ankles, like the nether garment of the Cossacks of the Don. Upon the pillars of Trajan and Antonine, the dresses of such nations as

(2) Bardon, sur les costumes des anciens Peuples.

were of Gothic origin, bear a strong resemblance to those of our sailors.

In their mode of lodging, the natives of the northern peninsula had still more of rudeness. Having little of comforts and even conveniences, of ornaments they were entirely devoid, except such as they gained by piracy or on foreign service. In the primitive times, like all semi-barbarians, they dwelt in scattered huts, roofed with the skins of wild beasts or the bark of trees. But, when religion taught them to erect temples to the gods, the concourse of people who came to offer prayers and sacrifices, induced them to build round about these holy places, for convenience and protection; and thus towns insensibly arose. The same took place, and for the same causes, in the environs of the castles of kings and great lords; as in the rest of Europe, in the feudal times, a strong baronial fortress or a monastery formed the nucleus of a town or village. The houses, of which the towns of the Danes were composed, were, for the most part, mere cottages supported by thick clumsy, mis-shapen posts, joined by boards and covered with turf, the light being admitted from the top; for the use of windows was then unknown. The lowest ranks were lodged not even so well; wretched cabins, ditches, or clefts of rocks, served as retreats in the rigour of winter. There couched on the bare ground, and half covered with skins tacked over their shoulders with thorns, they passed days in a kind of stupor, till their ferocious and rude youth, aroused by some call of war, started forth from their holes and caverns, to conquer a nation of conquering warriors, to fire the palaces of Rome, and to tread under foot so many fair monuments of luxury, arts, and industry.

But it was only the masses, or the dregs, of the people, that lived in such absolute ignorance of all the conveniences of domesticity; between them and the grandees was as great a contrast, as between the denizens of England's luxurious metropolis, and the wild cottiers of Connemara, nestling in their mud-built cabins. For, the Grandees distinguished themselves, at an early age, by their sumptuous edifices.[3] They prided themselves upon having them of very spacious dimensions, and adorned with elevated towers. A Danish writer[4] assures us, that the most wealthy of

(3) Mallet, p. 219. (4) Anagrim Crymag. p. 57.

those Norwegian lords, who settled in Iceland, erected mansions of extraordinary extent. The palace of Ingolph was 135 feet in length, and others were not inferior to this in magnitude; but it is probable, it was only a sort of inclosure for the accommodation of slaves and cattle. The most valuable ornaments of these palaces were the cielings, on which were carved some memorable exploits of the master of the house or of his ancestors. And the mountaineers of Norway and Sweden have, to this day, remarkable dexterity in the art of sculpture. But the Northern adventurers, who settled in richer countries, soon adopted the luxury of their new fellow-citizens, and emulated them in the erection of costly and tasteful buildings.

But, though this people inhabited a peninsula, abounding with convenient harbours, and were consequently skilled in navigation, their commerce appears to have been at a low ebb. Piracy was the end of their naval expeditions. Enterprise, excitement, and disdain of acquiring, by slow and honest industry, what could be won instantly by the sword, was a constant check upon commercial pursuits in their own, as well as in other regions subject to their visitations; which making property insecure, rendered industry unavailing. But whatever mercantile dealings these military nations may have had, were confined to commerce, or the exchange of commodities; for money was not coined in the three kingdoms of the north before the tenth century; and there is reason to believe it was Canute the Great, who first carried over English workmen into Denmark, and that they struck those small tokens of copper, of which some are still extant, and which bear generally the impress of a cross, sun, or star, without any lettered inscription; others, however, bear letters on both sides on the extreme circle. Of the latter a specimen may be seen in Speed's History of England. With regard to the pieces of coin, which have been occasionally found in those countries, these are doubtless the remnant of booty, which these plunderers amassed in their predatory excursions.

From their skill in navigation the Danes must have been very studious of astronomy; for a science so indispensable to this art, before the invention of the compass, was numbered among the accomplishments of youth. Thus, in ancient Chronicles it was common to find young warriors vaunting to their unkind mis-

tresses, that they could play at chess, skate gracefully on the ice, swim, make verses, and number the stars.[5] In the history of Charles and Grymer, Swedish kings, the gallant Grymer is thus described as an all-accomplished warrior: "He was early distinguished in arms; he knew how to dye the sword in the blood of his enemies, to run over craggy mountains, to wrestle, play at chess, trace the motions of the stars, and to throw far from him heavy weights. By the time he was twelve years old, no one could contend with him either with the sword, the bow, or in wrestling. He frequently showed his skill in the chambers of the damsels, before the king's lovely daughter. Desirous of acquiring her regard, he displayed his dexterity in handling his weapons, and his skill in sciences. At length, he ventured to make this demand: Wilt thou, O fair princess, if I can obtain the king's consent, accept me for a husband? To which she prudently replied, I must not make that choice myself, but go thou and offer the same proposal to my father."

For the study of astronomy the clear sky, that glows for the greater part of the year, is very favourable; and had the Northmen been, like the Babylonians, an inland people, they would like these, have turned their minds upwards to the contemplation of the glories of the heavenly host. This science, too, appears to have been all their own, and that they borrowed nothing from the older nations of Asia, is probable from the names greatly different, but equally fantastical, which they gave to the constellations. Thus, the greater Bear was denominated the great Dog; the lesser Bear, Charles's Wain; the three stars in Orion's belt, Friga's Distaff; Cygnus or the Swan, the milky way, the road of winter; &c. But whether they used the knowledge of the stars, only to guide them over the seas, without attempting to read their destinies in them,—whether they debased the noble science of astronomy by the delusions of judicial astrology,—is questionable; although they pried into futurity with no less ardour and curiosity, and by means no less silly. However, this may be advanced with certainty, that these maritime nations were very exact in regulating the times and seasons, whether it was that religion prescribing certain periodical sacrifices and ceremonies, rendered such regulations necessary, or whether it was from the taste which they

(5) Northern Antiq. II. p. 249.

had for the science of numbers. And it is singular, that they counted the unities up to twelve, instead of ten; and this mode is preferable to ours; twelve being a more perfect number, we mean, more easily divisible.[6] But in their division of the year into quarters, months, weeks, days, and hours, they followed the same custom, as the rest of Europe; with the slight exception, that in their computations they used the word, night, instead of day;[7] the former being deemed antecedent to the latter; as among the Hebrews: "the evening and the morning were the first day."[8] And a relic of this fashion, derived to us from the Saxons, still lingers in England in the phrases of Se'ennight, Fortnight.

That the Scandinavians, till long after the Christian era, were unacquainted with alphabetic writing, is confirmed by two reputable authors, Ælian and Tacitus. The former says that "neither the Thracians nor the other barbarians established in Europe are acquainted with letters, and that they look upon the use of this art as dishonourable, whereas the use of it is known to the barbarians of Asia;"[9] the latter historian, that "the men and women are equally ignorant of the use of letters."[10] But at length their use became common in the north, in the latter ages of Paganism;[1] we find kings, celebrated captains, and in general all persons educated with care, writing letters, epitaphs, and inscriptions. The common materials, upon which they wrote, were wood, the bark of the birch-tree, or skins;[2] the two former being applied to the like purpose by the Romans in the infancy of their republic, as the words Liber and Codex intimate; and Horace expressly says that ancient laws were carved on wood:

————Leges incidere ligno.

Mallet assures us,[3] "there are still extant some Runic epistles, and even love-letters, written on pieces of board or bark. Renheilm, a learned Swede, in his notes on the Icelandish Chronicle, entitled Torstein's Wig Saga, cites an ancient billet-doux, contain-

(6) Dalin, Hist. I. p. 245.
(7) Non dierum, ut nos, sed noctium numerum computant. Tacitus.
(8) Genesis, c. I.
(9) Hist. VIII. 6. (10) Litterarum secreta viri pariter ac fœminæ ignorant. Germ. c. 19. Consult also Pelloutier I. c.10.
(1) Verel. Runograph. p. 21. (2) p. 235.

ing these affecting words: 'I would rather, young maiden, repose on thy bosom, than possess the riches of the three Indies." And, as for those books in the Runic language, they were composed in those times when Christianity began to be prevalent in the north, as may be easily determined by many proofs, and especially, because Romish characters are found intermixed with the Runic." Thus far Mallet. The term, Runic, it is scarcely necessary to add, is applied to the language and letters of the ancient Goths, Danes, and other Northern nations.

After what has been said of the character and manners of the Scandinavians, we cannot form a very high opinion of the beauty and harmony of their language. As men invent words, as they acquire ideas—for words are but an embodiment of ideas,—it must have been rude and barren, wholly unfitted to express subtle and abstruse notions. But the people, who spoke it, being free and independent, warlike and empassioned, could not fail of imparting a similar spirit to their language. And in such a tongue there are always admirable points; for such a people, speaking without disguise or restraint, will express themselves with simplicity, freedom, and animation: their words come from the heart; and have energetic brevity, lively turns, and sincere sentiments, to which refined and polite people are little accustomed, from the constraints of education, the fear of ridicule, or of giving offence; in the one, their sentiments are the dictates of nature; in the other, of art; in the one, all is spoken that is felt; in the other more is concealed, than is spoken. Speech has been bestowed by the Creator as the interpreter of our thoughts; but by man it is too often perverted for hiding them.

It is beyond all dispute, that the people of Europe, from the farthest east even to the extremity of Spain, formerly spoke the same language, if we except the Sarmatians, that is, the ancestors of the Russians and Poles, who from the earliest times have had a tongue entirely their own; the Greeks, who borrowed many terms from the Orientals and Egyptians; and the Romans, who borrowed, in part, the language of the Greeks. And the Scythian or Celtic language, the parent of that spoken in the Northern peninsula, was preserved entire, in those countries only, of which the Romans never became masters; but even in those, which they occupied a long time, we find sensible traces of that general

European language. The Spanish and French are still full of words, derived from the Gothic or Teutonic; some of these the Romans could not put out of use; others there are, and in far greater number, which the immigrations of the Northmen have imported and brought into vogue. But this language, so general, would, of course, be split, having so wide a range, into various dialects, and imperceptibly changed in the same country; and such is the inevitable lot of all languages. We however recognize, in its numerous branches, divers traits still subsisting of their former common origin. The Teutonic or Gothic has a great similarity to the Bas-Breton, or the Welsh, and some, with the Irish. It is still spoken without many alterations in Iceland, and in the more distant provinces of Sweden; the Danish, the Norwegian, the Swedish, are evidently only the same language, and have a very great affinity with the German, especially with that spoken in Lower Germany.[3]

Rude and poor, however, as the language of the North was originally, it soon acquired a polish and an elevation from the general taste of the natives for poetry. A few specimens of their skill in this art have been transmitted to us, and translated into our language; one of which we propose to append to the present chapter.

Mankind being every where the same in their ruder and infant state, every where were led to make verses, long before they thought of writing in prose. This seems to us a reversal of the natural order; but it is because we do not place ourselves in the situation of a nation, who are ignorant of the art of writing, or whose prejudices hinder them from making use of it. So situated, they could have recourse to memory alone; memory was the sole medium of recording events; and the best assistant to memory is poetry. With what just reason, then, did the ancient Greeks represent the Muses as the daughters of Jupiter and Memory! Harmony strikes every ear; but song could not long subsist without Poetry; which was soon deemed an almost divine art, and employed for the noblest purposes, for the commemoration of remarkable events and great actions. Laws, religious rites, rural labours

(3) For this paragraph, touching upon the languages of Europe, we are wholly indebted to M. Mallet: See his "Introduction to the History of Denmark, p. 236, 7.

(in the primitive ages an honourable occupation) were promulged and recorded in numbers, as well as the praises of the Gods, of kings, and heroes. And since it requires a peculiar and uncommon talent to become a poet, those, so gifted, must have been very considerable and esteemed personages. Thus, all historic monuments of the North bear testimony to the honours which were paid to them by king and people; and we believe, that no country can be pointed out, which has been so favourable to the poetic art, nor any age so glorious for it, as that of the Scalds in the courts of Northern Princes. In the chronicles of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, we read that their kings were accompanied by one or more of these Scalds, or Bards.[4] They were especially honoured at the courts of Princes, who desired to immortalize their actions. Haguin, king of Norway, had in his train five celebrated poets, on that famous day, when the Julines were defeated by him; and history remarks, that they each sang a hymn to inflame the soldiers' courage, before they went into action. But, besides that they were highly esteemed, and sat on the same benches in the public festivals with the superior officers of the court, they enjoyed another advantage, which would be more envied by the poets of our day; the poems, which they composed in honour of kings and heroes, earned for them munificent presents. Seldom did a Scald sing his verses in the monarch's presence, without receiving on the spot golden rings, brilliant arms, or robes of great value. The great regard held for them, often went so far, as to procure for them the remission of crimes they had committed, on condition that they solicited pardon in verse.

In fine, Poetry was so honoured, that the greater part of the Scalds were men of illustrious birth, and Princes and even kings applied seriously to this art. Rognvald, count of the Orkneys,[5] passed for a very able poet; and in a song still preserved he boasts that he could make verses on all sorts of subjects. Regner Lodbrog—a specimen of whose compositions is given in the sequel literally translated—was no less a good poet, than a great warrior and navigator. It was not, however, on nobleness of birth, without other merit, that respect for poets was founded. A people, who did every thing for glory, was never wanting in respect to

(4) Torfæus, Hist. Norweg. II. p. 21.
(5) Wormius, Litter. Runic. p. 195.

the talents of one, who spread and perpetuated it, to whatever rank he belonged. A Prince or illustrious warrior did not often expose his life with so much intrepidity, unless he was likely to be lauded by his Scald, who was a witness and rewarder of his bravery. A celebrated Norwegian King placed the bards around his person in the day of battle, proudly telling them, that they were to relate not what they heard, but what they saw.[6]

These same personages, also, sang their verses at solemn festivals to the sound of the flute or harp. But the subject of these effusions was not always a single event, as a victory, or other noble actions; it was sometimes a genealogical history of all the kings of the country, down to the reigning Prince, who was always, with dexterous flattery, sure to derive his descent from them, and generally from Thor or Woden; for no people gloried more in the pride of ancestry, than the Scandinavian monarchs.

The style of these antique poems was highly figurative, sometimes enigmatical, very remote from ordinary language, and for this reason, grand, but pompous; sublime, but wild; extravagant, and not seldom obscure. Grandiloquent and sonorous diction was more suited and acceptable to a convivial or festive assembly, than pure and lucid eloquence. If it be the characteristic of poetry to have nothing in common with prose, except the words, if every thing should be expressed in imagery, figures, hyperboles, similes, and all the machinery of the poetic art,—the Scandinavian bards may claim the upper seats in the Temple of the Muses. But true poetry is the language of nature, always simple; whatsoever, therefore, is artificial and overstrained, is contrary to its spirit. A fairer specimen of genuine poetry cannot be found in the whole compass of language, combining at once simplicity and sublimity, with chaste imagery, than the song of Moses, in the 15th Chapter of Exodus. In short, the Scriptures, independently of their divine origin, contain more sublimity, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains of eloquence and poetry, than can be collected from any book in any language.

We have said that the style of the Runic bards was affected, their language extravagant, their metaphors unnatural. Thus, a poet seldom expressed the heavens by any other circumlocution,

(6) Mallet, p. 242.

than 'the skull of the giant Ymer,' one of their demigods; the rain-bow was called 'the bridge of the Gods'; gold was turned into 'the tears of Friga'; poetry, 'the present or drink of Odin'; the earth was indifferently styled 'the spouse of Odin, or the flesh of Ymer,' or 'the vessel which floats for ages'; herbs and plants were called the 'hair or fleece of the earth'; the horizon was nothing less 'than the hoop of the world'; with other puerilities. Other figurative expressions were just and chaste, breathing the spirit of the Muse; as, when they describe the stars to be the poetry of heaven, and the flowers, the stars of the earth; the warrior's sword to flash like lightning, and the rush of the army, as a mountain-torrent, and the shouting of the hosts as reaching up to heaven; their eyes in the combat to blaze with fire, and the battle-field to be as a bath of blood, and the blows of the combatants like thunderbolts. The lover while praising his mistress, whose bosom is white as alabaster, yet deplores that her heart is cold as ice. A ship was described as the horse of the waves, and the tongue as the sword of words, and the vehicle of thought, &c.

We may conclude this division of our subject, by transcribing the summary reflections of our modern Tacitus[7] upon the political state of the Northern nations, when they became formidable to the rest of Europe, by their invasions and piracies:

"During several generations, Denmark and Scandinavia continued to send forth innumerable pirates distinguished by strength, by valour, merciless ferocity, and hatred of the Christian name. No country suffered so much from these invaders, as England. Her coasts lay near to the ports whence they sailed, nor was any part of our island so far distant from the seas, as to be secure from attack. The same atrocities which had attended the victorious Saxon over the Celt, were now, after a lapse of ages, suffered by the Saxon at the hand of the Dane. Civilisation, just as it began to rise, was met by this blow, and sunk down once more. Large colonies of adventurers from the Baltic established themselves on the Eastern shores, spread gradually westward, and supported by constant re-inforcements from beyond the sea, aspired to the dominion of the whole realm. The struggle between the two fierce Teutonic breeds lasted during six generations. Each was alternately

(7) B. Macaulay's Hist. of England, I, p. 10.

paramount. Cruel massacres, followed by cruel retribution, provinces wasted, convents plundered, and cities razed to the ground make up the greater part of the history of those evil days. At length, the North ceased to pour forth a constant stream of fresh depredators, and from that time mutual aversion of races began to subside. Inter-marriage became frequent. The Danes learned the religion of the Saxons; and thus one cause of deadly animosity was removed. The Danish and Saxon tongues, both dialects of one wide-spread language, were blended together. But the distinction between the two nations was by no means effaced, when an event took place which prostrated both in common slavery at the feet of a third people, under William the Norman."*

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* The plan of this work prevents us from doing competent justice to the subject of the foregoing essay; but the curious reader will find it fully and learnedly discussed in Mallet's NORTHERN ANTIQUITIES: The very erudite author has ably described the manners, customs, religion, and laws of the ancient Danes, and other northern nations including those of our Saxon ancestors; with a Translation of the EDDA, and other pieces from the ancient Icelandish tongue. This work has been translated from the French by Dr Percy, Bishop of Dromore, with additional notes by the translator. To it is appended Goranson's Latin version of the EDDA.

The subjoined Ode, usually called The QUIDA, has been selected not only as a fair specimen of the Runic muse, but as an historical epitome of the achievements of Regnar, from the Northern Hellespont to the British isles. In this effusion, war, the worst of evils, is considered a pastime, the battle field, the most awful of sights, as a scene of delight. Every incident attending the slaughter, all the imagery of death, is recalled with exultation. The bloody fray is hailed by the human hell-hound as the sweetest hour of his life, even as the day of his nuptials: "Was it not like that hour when I placed my smiling bride beside me on the marriage couch?" The clashing of arms, the shouts of the encountering hosts, the shrieks and yells of the wounded, are as music to the ear of the iron-clad and iron-hearted warrior. But the day we trust is now passing or past, when war shall be the occupation of mankind, and the age is now dawning, when the tongue and the pen, not the sabre and the musket, shall employ the faculties of the nations: 'Cedant arma togæ, concedat laurea linguæ.'

[SEE TURNER'S ANGLO-SAXONS; SIXTH EDITION, vol. i, p. 475.

THE DYING ODE OF REGNER LODBROG.

We fought with swords: . . . When in Gothland I slew an enormous serpent, my reward was the beauteous Thora. Thence I was deemed a man: they called me Lodbrog from that slaughter. . . . I thrust the monster through with a spear, with the steel productive of splendid rewards.

We fought with swords: I was very young, when towards the east, in the straits of Eirar, we gained rivers of blood for the ravenous wolf; ample food for the yellow-footed fowl (eagle). There the hard iron sung upon the lofty helmets. The whole ocean was one wound. The raven waded in the blood of the slain.

We fought with swords: we lifted high our lances; when I had numbered twenty years, and every where acquired renown. We conquered eight barons at the mouth of the

* Five Pieces of Runic Poetry, published by Dodsley, in 1763.

Danube. We procured ample entertainment for the eagle in that slaughter. Bloody sweat fell in the ocean of wounds. A host of men there lost their lives.

We fought with swords: we enjoyed the fight, when we sent the inhabitants of Helsing to the Hall of Odin. We sailed up the Vistula. Then the sword acquired spoils: the whole ocean was one wound: the earth grew red with reeking gore: the sword grinned at the coats of mail: the sword cleft the shields asunder.

We fought with swords: I well remember that no one fled that day into the battle, before in the ships Herauder fell. There does not a fairer warrior divide the ocean with his vessels. . . . This prince ever brought to the battle a gallant heart.

We fought with swords: the army cast away their shields. Then flew the spear to the breast of the warriors. The sword in the fight cut the very rocks; the shield was all besmeared with blood, before king Rafno fell, our foe. The warm sweat ran down from the heads on the coats of mail.

We fought with swords, before the isles of Indir. We gave ample prey for the ravens to rend in pieces; a banquet for the wild beasts that feed on flesh. At that time all were valiant; it were difficult to single out any one. At the rising of the sun, I saw the lances pierce; the bows darted the arrows from them.

We fought with swords: loud was the din of arms, before King Eistin fell in the field. Thence, enriched with golden spoils, we marched to fight in the land of Vals. There the sword cut the painted shields. In the meeting of helmets, the blood ran from the cloven skulls of men.

We fought with swords, before Boring-holmi. We held bloody shields: we stained our spears. Showers of arrows brake the shield in pieces. The bow sent forth the glittering steel. Volnir fell in the conflict, than whom there was not a greater king. Wide on the shores lay the scattered dead: the wolves rejoiced over their prey.

We fought with swords, in the Flemings' land: the battle widely raged before king Freyr fell therein. The blue steel all reeking with blood fell on the golden mail. Many a virgin bewailed the slaughter of that morning. The beasts of prey had ample spoil.

We fought with swords, before Ainglanes. There saw I thousands lie dead in the ships: we sailed to the battle for six days before the army fell. There we celebrated a mass of weapons. At the rising of the sun Valdiofur fell before our swords.

We fought with swords, at Bardafurda. A shower of blood rained from our weapons. Headlong fell the pallid corpse, a prey for the hawks. The bow gave a twanging sound. The blade sharply bit the coats of mail: it bit the helmet in the fight. The arrow sharp with poison and all besprinkled with bloody sweat ran to the wound.

We fought with swords, before the bay of Hiadning. We held aloft magic shields in the play of battle. Then might you see men, who rent shields with their swords. The helmets were shattered in the murmur of the warriors. The pleasure of that day was like having a fair virgin placed beside one in bed.

We fought with swords, in the Northumbrian land. A furious storm descended on the shields: many a lifeless body fell to the earth. It was about the time of the morning when the foe was compelled to fly in the battle. There the sword sharply bit the polished helmet. The pleasure of that day was like kissing a young widow at the highest seat of the table.

We fought with swords, in the isles of the south. There Herthiofe proved victorious: there died many of our valiant warriors. In the shower of arms Rogvaldur fell: I lost my son. In the play of arms came the deadly spear: his lofty crest was dyed with gore. The birds of prey bewailed his fall: they lost him that prepared them banquets.

We fought with swords, in the Irish plains. The bodies of the warriors lay intermingled. The hawks rejoiced at the play of swords. The Irish king did not act the part of the Eagle . . . Great was the conflict of sword and shield. King Marstan was killed in the bay: he was given a prey to the hungry ravens.

We fought with swords: the spear resounded, the banners shone on the coats of mail. I saw many a warrior fall in the morning: many a hero in the contention of arms. Here the

sword reached betimes the heart of my son: it was Egill deprived Agnar of life. He was a youth who knew not fear.

We fought with swords, at Skioldunga. We kept our words: we carved out with our weapons a plenteous banquet for the wolves of the sea (the fishes). The ships were all besmeared with crimson, as if for many days the maidens had brought and poured forth wine. All rent was the mail in the clash of arms.

We fought with swords, when Harold fell. I saw him struggling in the twilight of death; that young chief so proud of his flowing locks: he who spent his mornings among the young maidens: he who loved to converse with the handsome widows.

We fought with swords: we fought three kings in the isle of Lindis. Few had reason to rejoice that day. Many fell into the jaws of the wild beasts. The hawk and the wolf tore the flesh of the dead: they departed glutted with prey. The blood of the Irish fell plentifully into the ocean, during the time of slaughter.

We fought with swords, at the isle of Onlug. The uplifted weapon bit the shields. The gilded lance grated on the mail. The traces of that fight will be seen for ages. Three kings marched up to the play of arms. The shores of the sea were stained with blood. The lances appeared like flying dragons.

We fought with swords. Death is the happy portion of the brave; for he stands the foremost against the storm of weapons. He, who flies from danger, often bewails his miserable life. Yet how difficult is it to rouse up a coward to the play of arms! The dastard feels no heart in his bosom.

We fought with swords. Young men should march up to the conflict of arms: man should meet man, and never give way. In this hath always consisted the nobility of the warrior. He who aspires to the love of his mistress, ought to be dauntless in the clash of arms.

We fought with swords. Now I find for certain that we are drawn along by fate. Who can evade the decrees of destiny? Could I have thought the conclusion of my life reserved for Ella, when almost expiring I shed torrents of blood? When I launched forth with my ships into the deep? When in the Scottish gulfs I gained large spoils for the wolves?

We fought with swords; this fills me still with joy, because I know a banquet is preparing by the father of the Gods. Soon in the splendid Hall of Odin, we shall drink beer out of the skulls of our enemies. A brave man sinks not at death. I shall utter no repining words, as I approach the palace of the Gods.

We fought with swords: Oh that the sons of Aslauga † knew! Oh that my children knew the sufferings of their father! that numerous serpents, filled with poison, tear me to pieces! Soon would they be here: soon would they wage bitter war with their swords. I gave a mother to my children, from whom they inherit a valiant heart.

We fought with swords. Now I touch on my last moments. I receive a deadly hurt from the viper. A serpent inhabits the hall of my heart. Soon shall my sons black their swords in the blood of Ella. They wax red with fury; they burn with rage. Those gallant youths will not rest till they have avenged their father.

We fought with swords. Battles fifty and one have been fought under my banners. From my early youth I learnt to dye my sword in crimson: I never yet could find a king more valiant than myself. The Gods now invite me to them. Death is not to be lamented.

'Tis with joy I cease. The goddesses of destiny are come to fetch me. Odin hath sent them from the habitation of the Gods. I shall be joyfully received into the highest seat, I shall quaff full goblets among the Gods. The hours of my life are passed away. I die laughing.

† Aslauga was the second wife of Regner.

VIII.

KING ALFRED'S CHARTERS,

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN AND ANGLO-SAXON ORIGINALS,

IN

KEMBLE'S CODEX DIPLOMATICUS ANGLOSAXONICUS.

The following observations on the charters whether public or private which have come down to us from the Anglo-Saxon times are extracted from the Introduction to the Codex Diplomaticus Ævi Anglo-Saxonici, and render any further preliminary information unnecessary.

To these [i. e. *the charters*] we must look, for almost all our information respecting the law of real property; the descent and liabilities of lands; the nature of tenure and service; the authority of the king, the nobility and the church; even the power of the popular councils. From the Anglo-Saxon Wills alone we derive a reasonable account of the household arrangements, and disposition of real and personal estate. From the records of the synods or councils and of the county courts, we gain our only insight into the nature and forms of process. CODEX, *vol.* i, *p.* l.

That Augustine and his companions, when they introduced Christianity among the Saxons, introduced with it, writing, annals, an era, and the necessary forms of civilization, it is not unreasonable to believe. Some of the documents themselves [*charters*], which profess to belong to this very early period, bear the marks of a Roman and ecclesiastical origin. They differ in some material points from the forms afterwards current in Europe: while at the same time, in some very remarkable respects, they bear a resemblance to the most ancient papyri. That at the end of the seventh and commencement of the eighth centuries, lands were conveyed by charter in England, we learn from Beda's letter to Ecgberht: his words are, "Ipsas quoque literas privilegiorum suorum, quasi veraciter Deo dignas, pontificum, abbatum, et potestatum sæculi obtinebant subscriptione confirmari [*They got the writings which declared their rights, as being truly worthy*

of God, to be confirmed by the subscription of pontiffs, abbats, and the temporal powers.]" And these words, which evidently show that this was no new arrangement, appear to me to be applicable to the whole period between Augustine and Beda. For the extreme importance attached to the destruction of all remnants of heathendom, to which the symbolic transfers more especially belonged, rendered it from the very first necessary to substitute for them such forms as the Church had sanctioned; since in all times, the possession and transfer of land become one of the deepest foundations of the whole social polity. I therefore see no reason to doubt that land was transferred by documentary forms, either with or without symbolic forms, from the very first introduction of Christianity among the Anglo-Saxons. IBID. *p.* vi.

It would be unreasonable to expect us to decide with certainty upon a point involved so deeply in obscurity, as the relations of the manifold Saxon tribes during the continuance of the several kingdoms.....History knows little of the various reguli who within their petty territories exercised the regal power; and nearly as little of the extent and nature of the authority claimed or vindicated by the sons and brothers of ruling sovereigns. Oswine, rex Cantuariorum, if ever there were such a person, is known to us from these charters alone; and so little known to us from them, that the compiler of the chartulary in which they are found, confounds him with St Oswine of Northumberland, and notes discrepancies in the dates upon that supposition. Suaebhard, rex Cantuariorum, is mentioned as an intruder by various chroniclers; he himself in his charters asserts his paternal right to the throne. Sigired calls himself rex dimidiæ partis Cantiæ, at a time respecting whose events the annalists are silent. During the same period we find Eardwulf, and Heardberht, reges Cantuariorum: if mentioned in the chronicles at all, these persons must be taken to be intended by the *reges exteri* who rather plundered than ruled Kent. Aethelberht the second son of Wihtred, not only calls himself king of Kent, but grants lands by that title, during the later time of his father, and Eâdberht his elder brother. In one original charter he dates his reign from Wihtred's death in 725; twenty years before, according to the Chroniclers, he came to the throne. It is perhaps not impossible that in the very early periods of Anglo-saxon history, the name of king (cyning from cyn, generosus a genere) may have been assumed by the sons of sovereigns, whether or not accompanied with an appanage, rights and jurisdiction: just as at present in Germany all the children of a noble parent bear the title of the father. In rather later times, however, I should be inclined to confine it to such princes as were crowned in the lifetime of their father, and associated with him in the government.

Various kings appear to have used various titles in proportion as they extended their power and influence. Aethilbald styles himself sometimes king of the Mercians, sometimes of the Angles, sometimes of the Southangles: and this he might justly do, since the Mercians, whose king he was, were the most important of the English Angle tribes; and the Southangles, if ever separated in their government, were an appanage of the reigning Mercian family: Peada, Penda's son, was during his father's lifetime king of the Middle and Southangles. Others add indefinitely cæterarumque gentium in circuitu persistentium, even though the first title were one (as rex Angulsaxonum) which comprised all the populations really subject to their rule: but this, which is undoubtedly of later growth, smacks of the bombast of Byzantium. The kings of Mercia after Coenuulf's second year, (viz. 798) take also the style of kings of Kent, which was an appanage to Mercia in the hands of Cûthred, Coenuulf's brother, till 805, became again an indepen-

dent kingdom under Baldred, and finally sank into an appanage for the sons and brothers of the Westsaxon kings. These latter called themselves originally kings of the Gewissas, their family tribe; somewhat later, kings of the Westsaxons; later still kings of the Westsaxons and men of Kent. After the union of nearly all England in the person of Aethelstân, this style was in general abandoned for that of Rex totius Albionis, Rex et primicerius totius Brittanniae; or words of similar import.

As we have scarcely any Northumberland charters, a fact as strange as it is much to be lamented, we can give no account whatever of the style adopted by the kings of that country; it is probable however that they carefully maintained the distinction between Deira and Bernicia, which has been unaccountably overlooked by many historians of Saxon England. The kings of Essex called themselves Reges Eastsexorum or Eastsaxonum as long as their kingdom lasted. Those of Eastanglia, probably Reges Eastanglorum, Orientalium anglorum, or merely Anglorum. The relations however of these kings is throughout obscure; and history has little recorded of them, from the murder of Aethilberht, till the defeat and death of Eâdmund; after whose fall Eastanglia never recovered its independence, being held as a kind of province by the Danish invaders, or finally incorporated in the dominions of Wessex. IBID. *p.* xxii.

A very few words may be said of the boundaries. I have not stated this as a distinct and substantive part of a Saxon charter, because it seems incidental to the grant, a definition in short of the place named. But very rarely is a Saxon charter without a description of them; in the earlier documents this is usually incorporated with, in the later appended to, the grant. It would seem as if for the most part it were added after the instrument was formally completed, as in almost every case they are described in Anglo-Saxon, although the charter itself is drawn up in Latin. When the solemn cession had been made, it was probably left to the local officers, in conjunction with the grantee, to see that its limits were accurately defined. IBID. *p.* lxii.

That our pagan forefathers, previously to the arrival of the Roman missionaries, had some kind of date, some definite era from which they reckoned, is sufficiently obvious: but it is far from clear what description of date or era it was. Its inaccuracy and uncertainty are rendered evident to us by that which proves that something of the kind existed, viz. the scattered records of kings who reigned before the introduction of Christianity, and some leading events of their respective periods; but we are not allowed to judge in what these early fasti consisted, from what point they started, or what periods of time they embraced. But, whether they were merely the alliterative poems, which even in the time of Tacitus formed the sole history of the Teutonic tribes; or the more advanced records of a sacerdotal class, carved with Runic letters on blocks of wood and stone; or the annals of individual kings, dating from the great festivals of the heathen year; they could present but little worthy of attention to the Christian and Roman monks whose habits had been formed in other climes and under other creeds. In all that these, the earliest historians of England, have left us, we have evidence of what unsatisfactory materials they had to deal with. A majority of the kings recorded in their pages are mythic heroes common both to England and Germany; while the constant recurrence of particular numbers in the dates of their reigns are equally convincing proofs of mythic tradition. History has nothing to do with them; they fall into the circle of mythology. Even of those who approach somewhat nearer to historical periods, little more

than the names has survived; and it is often doubtful whether even those are or are not names of men: it may be fairly questioned whether we know the name and rank of Æthelberht's grandfather.

Although it is far from probable that Augustine was the first to plant Christianity among the Anglo-saxons, yet the results of any previous labours must have been very unimportant; nor is it to be imagined that letters fit for the composition of continuous annals, or a regular system of dates, were among the number. When therefore the missionaries of Gregory had so far prevailed as to obtain permission to build a church and preach the gospel abroad, it seems that one of their first cares would be to habituate the people to the Roman character, the Roman calendar, and the Roman era; perhaps also to the decimal system of notation. They cannot have expected to be continually recruited from Rome; and the early appearance of Anglosaxons, even of high rank, among the bishops and archbishops of the Anglican church, shows that if the teachers brought zeal to their task, they were not repulsed by backwardness on the part of those whom they taught. The great advance in civilization made, especially in Northumberland, before the close of the seventh century, proves that even the rough denizens of that inhospitable portion of our land were apt and earnest scholars. There was therefore every reason to introduce among the Anglosaxons such branches of learning as were looked upon as essential; and among these the art of writing in Roman letters (vulgarly called Anglosaxon), and the Roman method of dating, might justly be considered the first.

To this would be added another consideration of no mean importance. Whatever fasti existed, could only record the deeds of Pagans: the songs were not unfrequently *carmina diabolica*, for in the language of those times, the gods of our forefathers were demons. Moreover, the Runes or letters of the Anglosaxons had been used for little else than divinations and auguries, which from the first were an especial object of horror with the missionaries: ill adapted as they were to continuous writing, there is little probability of their having ever been put to that use; and it was less difficult for Augustine and his companions to introduce the characters with the language of Rome, than to learn the rude forms of the Saxon letters, which were as little known to the mass of the people as the new ones which replaced them.

It seems therefore certain that the *History* of England commences with Augustine; that is to say, the orderly and digested series of events, arranged according to certain definite and systematic dates, and committed to writing accordingly. Not that I imagine the earliest missionaries to have busied themselves in collecting the fragmentary traditions of those who to them can only have been benighted and barbarous Pagans: on the contrary, they were far more likely to destroy any that they could lay their hands on. But that the first who composed annals of their own times, which served as a basis for future chroniclers, were the Romans. In latter times tradition meagrely filled up the void they had left; and a few echos only have come down to us from the centuries which may have elapsed between the first settlement of the Saxons on our shores, and the successful and most glorious work of Gregory; dull and fragmentary voices telling of generations which have past away from us for ever!

But if we owe an era to Augustine, what is that likely to have been? Surely no other than that which had been in use in the place from which he came. I see no reason to doubt that this was the era of the *Incarnation of our Lord*; perhaps also the cycle of the Indictions. What other could in fact be used? Certainly not the years of Roman emperors or popes, unknown to the new converts even by name: hardly the regnal years of petty sovereigns, numerous, far apart, some still

addicted to Pagan superstitions, many still unknown even by name to the missionaries, all still uncertain in what year their reigns began. But if other reasons had been wanting, there was one which seems likely to have been decisive. The great Christian festival of the nativity fell, by a wonderful chance, upon that mystical night which the *mothers* celebrated among all the nations of the north, with solemn religious observances and ceremonies. In the spirit which then, and since, animated the missionaries of the faith, this day, holy among the heathen, was especially adopted by their teachers, and became for the new converts the commencement of the year. From the night of Christ's birth the years were henceforth reckoned, and what so natural, so apparently unavoidable, as the affixing of Christ's date to the year so commenced? Another and strong ground may be assigned for the belief here expressed. The Romans found Christianity in England; but that in which the orthodoxy of those days mainly consisted they did not find; I mean the Roman time of celebrating Easter. Now the disputes on this subject between the Western and Eastern churches had already led to the composition of elaborate tables, accurately defining the recurring dates upon the calculation of which the paschal period depended. Amongst these the most celebrated are those of Dionysius, who about the year 526 put forth his complete series of circles, introducing for the first time the years of the incarnation. It will be difficult to believe that these tables, so important for the solution of the great controversy, were not brought to Britain by Augustine; and still more difficult to believe that he did not eagerly seize the opportunity to substitute the venerable era they contained for any other that he might find here established.

Those who argue that the era of the incarnation was not introduced into England till the time of Beda, appear to me to have no sound grounds for their belief. IBID. *p.* lxviii.

I believe it is now admitted that in the course of the eighth century the pontifical had superseded the imperial indictions in England: and Pagi, the learned commentator on Baronius, asserts this distinctly. I am satisfied that this view is the correct one, with perhaps the exception of the word *superseded*; for I know of no evidence that we ever had the imperial indictions. *p.* lxxix.

Anachronism in dates is undoubtedly the surest test by which we detect forgery in a charter; but . . . . anachronism is not to be charged too lightly: the error may lie after all with ourselves. Especially allowance is to be made in apographs found in chartularies: here setting aside the case already alluded to where the year of our Lord had been miscalculated from the indiction, a want of coincidence between the year and the indiction is not of uncommon occurrence. This however generally arises from the latter date having been partially abraded by age, and so misread: the want of a light line at the bottom readily transforms a V (in the old charters U) into a II; an abrasion may convert an X into a V: hence we not uncommonly find in these copies indiction IIII for VII or XV; VII for XII; XII for XV, and the like. Nor is another error at all uncommon, where a letter or contraction has been taken to be part of the date: for instance, indictione u (uero) IIa, has often been read as if it were indictione VIIa. Again, indictione Xma, has become transformed into indictione XIIIa, the strokes of the written *m* having been taken to represent three units. This cause of error is so frequent as to render multiplied examples unnecessary. But even the carelessness of a scribe may have given rise to blunders of omission . . . *p.* lxxxviii.

The researches of diplomatists have established the fact that many of the most powerful princes of the Teutonic tribes could not write at all, but stamped their names upon their grants. *p.* xc.

The witnesses to Saxon charters vary with the circumstances of the time and country. They probably were very generally merely the court or comites of the king, and with the importance of the king, the importance of the witnesses would vary. The earliest instruments of this nature, granted by the petty sovereigns, or half sovereigns of petty states, are distinguished by the small number of signatures, the presence of one bishop, or at most two, and the simple manner of the subscription. The same remarks apply also to grants made as it were in the private court, at the private dwelling of the king. But far different is it in later times with the records of synodal decrees, or with grants made at the annual councils, or the great festivals of Christmas and Easter, when the king celebrated these. Then we have an array of lay lords and church lords, sometimes comprehending a majority of the nobles and bishops of the whole land; and then we have a multitude of ministri and milites, and even some names without addition, which we may believe to be those of persons who were not members of the king's court. Far different in still later times, when there was but one king and one court, and when courtiers of all classes crowded to testify their approbation of grants, which might act hereafter as happy precedents in their own case. *p.* xcii.

The sign of the cross is found in the earliest Italian documents, and is universal among the Anglo-Saxons, from whom we ourselves have derived it . . . It may be doubted whether an older and heathen feeling did not lurk at first under this symbol; whether, in short, such marks may not have been held binding among the Saxons even before the introduction of Christianity. For the hammer of Thunor (Thôrr) was the true heathen symbol in all contracts, and it is well known that the hammer of Thunor was represented by a cross. *p.* xciii.

The second class of documents contained in this collection [*i. e. of charters*], comprise the records of trials determined either in the county court before the sheriff, or in the great synods or councils, held twice a year. These meetings, which present the nearest approach to our parliaments that is to be met with in the Anglo-Saxon institutions, correspond in some degree to the old heathen assemblies, and the later March and May-fields of the Franks . . . That these councils were legislative bodies we may see by the collections of laws passed in them not only for the church, but the laity; and a passage already cited (*p.* lxxiii) proves that they were also courts of justice. *p.* cvi.

Perhaps, however, the most valuable and interesting of all the documents contained in this collection are the Wills. *p.* cviii.

[*The reader is referred to King Alfred's Will, to be given hereafter in this volume, for some general remarks on the subject.*]

CHARTERS, BEARING THE SIGNATURE OF ALFRED, BEFORE HE BECAME KING IN 871.

1. The first appearance of Alfred's name affixed to a charter is under the year 853, when he was only four years old. His father Ethelwolf, then king, "for the expiation of his crimes and the absolution of his sins," grants some land to "his faithful minister Ealdhere &c. &c." Among the witnesses to this grant are; "+ I Ethelbearht king have confirmed and subscribed this grant with the sign of the holy cross." "+ I Elfred son of the king have consented and subscribed." It is evident that either this charter is a forgery, or that some person acted for the child Alfred in affixing his consent and signature.

But this is not the only difficulty; for Ethelbert second son of Ethelwolf, was never, as far as we know, king during his father's life.

2. In the charter, whether genuine or spurious, containing Ethelwolf's grant of tithes to the church, [see Harmony of the Chronicles, page 16,] and dated April 22, 854, we again find "+ Ælfred son of the king," but not in the second charter bearing the same date.

3. Under the same year is a grant to Malmesbury abbey church, to which the name of Alfred is also affixed. "+ Aelfred son of the king." The charter is probably a forgery.

4. In 855, to a grant, by king Ethelwolf, of some land near Rochester castle. "+ I Aelfred son of the king have consented and subscribed."

5. A charter, by Ethelbert, "king of the West-Saxons," and therefore granted between 860 and 862, bears the signature "+ I Elfræd son of the king," i. e. of king Ethelwolf.

6. In 862, to another charter of Ethelbert, "+ I Aelfred brother of the king have consented and subscribed."

7. To another, of the same king, in the same year, "+ I Aelfred son of the king."

8. In 868, Aug. 1, a charter of Burgred king of Mercia, to Theodore abbat of Croyland, bears the attestation—"I Alfred brother of the king of West-Saxony have consented."

9. In 868, to a charter by Ethelswith Alfred's sister, and queen of Mercia, "+ I Ælfred brother of the king have consented and subscribed."

In 871, Ethelred died, and Alfred was elected king with the unanimous consent of all the estates of the realm, notwithstanding that some of his brother's children were then alive; but these appear to have been thought too young to protect the kingdom from its enemies; and, as the crown was at that time elective, and not hereditary—or if hereditary, only so in a qualified degree, —the eldest nephew of Alfred, Ethelward, was easily set aside in favour of his illustrious uncle, though, on Alfred's death in 901, he set up a fruitless claim to the succession in opposition to his cousin Edward the Elder.

CHARTERS BEARING THE SIGNATURE OF ALFRED AFTER HE BECAME KING IN 871.

We have not a single charter belonging to the first seven years of king Alfred's life, and it may be remarked as a curious fact, that there was (so it seems) a "duke Alfred" contemporary with the Great King. His name appears as "Elfred dux," or "Ælfred dux," subscribed to charters granted between the years 871 and 889.

In 878 begin the charters which properly are to be ascribed to king Alfred himself, and it seems the more imperative to give them in a collected edition of his works, from the great probability that, unlike his more illiterate predecessors, who may be supposed to have had little to do with such documents,—king Alfred, being a scholar fond of using his pen, and of taking part in every thing which concerned the good of his people, may himself have assisted in penning the charters which bear his name. Twelve only of these instruments bear Alfred's name, and it is

with good grounds believed that seven of these are spurious,—forged in after times by the monks to secure their lawful lands under the apparent authority of the great king, or perhaps to substantiate their claim to lands which in justice did not belong to them. The grounds, upon which each charter is supposed to be a forgery, will be given in a note.

1. A. D. 878. [*See Codex, ii,* 105.]

[1] OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST REIGNS FOR EVER! WHEREAS all the kingdoms of this transitory life and the dispensers of those kingdoms, from the beginning of this world, fade and pass away; therefore everlasting joys must be obtained for the fleeting and mortal state of men. WHEREFORE I, Ælfred, by the ordinance of Divine Providence king of the West-Saxons, for the remedy of my soul and the forgiveness of my sins, with willing mind have given a certain portion of land, i. e. ten cassates, in a place called Suth-tun at Prince's Island, which is named Aethelingaey by its usual English name, to supply monastic subsistence for the monks, who therein under regular exercises devoutly serve Almighty God: and this liberty I have given with devout mind to the aforesaid monastery, with the meadows, pastures, brooks and all things rightly belonging thereto; that it may remain secure, free and unburdened for ever from the claim of all king's taxes, and of works and of penal causes, saving[2] only expeditions against an enemy, and the building of fortresses and bridges: and if any one shall hereafter wish to augment this [gift], may God augment his goods in the land of the living! But, if any one, which God forbid! swollen with the breath of pride, and led on by tyrannic power, shall endeavour to infringe and nullify this gift, let him know that he is anathematized by all the Christian church; and unless he beforehand mend his ways, shall give account on the day of judgment before Christ and his angels. But the land aforesaid and the donation of this land extends and is bounded by these boundaries, &c.

The schedule of this grant was written in the year 878 from the

(1) This charter, which is in Latin, is marked in the Codex, [vol. ii, p. 105] as a forgery, or, at least, as of doubtful genuineness.

(2) This is what our lawyers call the 'trinoda necessitas,' from which no estate was exempt.

incarnation of our Lord, 4th indiction, with the consent of these witnesses whose names are here to be seen.

+ I king Alfred, have confirmed this my gift with the sign of the Holy cross. + I, Ealferth bishop &c.

2. A. D. 871—878. [*Codex, ii,* 106.]

3. This is the bequest that Alvred king grants into Sceaftesbury, to love God and Saint Mary and all God's saints, for the warning [safety] of my soul, with hale tongue; that is an hundred hides with meat and men all as it stands; and my daughter Agelyve further with the property into the minster, for that she was hooded [consecrated] in sickness; and my soken to the minster that I myself owned, that is forsteal, and hamsoken, and mundbreche; and these are the lands' names, that I have granted thither; that is at Dunheved and at Cumtune 40 hides, and at Hanlee and Gissic 20 hides, and at Terente 10 hides, and at Ywern 15 hides, and Funtemel 15 hides.

And this is to witness Edward my son, and Athered archbishop, and Alcheferd bishop and Adelheach bishop and Wlfhere alderman, and Adwlf alderman, and Cuthred alderman, and Tumbert abbat, and Midred my thane, and Athelwulf, and Osric, and Berthful and Cyma. And look whoso turns this gift aside, may he have God's curse and saint Mary's, and all God's saints, for ever: Amen.

To the foregoing charter, which is in Anglo-Saxon, is appended a Latin copy of the same, of which the following is a literal translation.

+ I Alvred king, in honour of God and of the blessed virgin Mary and of all the saints, give and grant, being alive and still thriving, to the church of Scepton a hundred hides of land, with the men and all appurtenances, as they now are, and Ayleva my daughter with the same, who compelled by ill health has become a nun in the same church: saving these rights which belong to my crown, namely forsteal and hamsocken and munbreck.

And these are the names of the lands which I have given and granted to the church aforesaid; Dunehefda and Kuntune 40 hides; in Henlee and Gersicg 20 hides; in Tarente 10 hides; in Hyuuerna 15 hides; in Funtemel 15 hides.

The witnesses of this matter are, Edward my son, Athelred archbishop, Alfred bishop, and Adelheac bishop, and Uulfere, Raduulf, Kudred alderman, Turebert abbat, Mildred and Atheluulf, and Osric, and Berthuulf, and my court.

Whosoever shall turn these aside, may he be by God and the holy virgin Mary and all the saints accursed for ever. Amen.

3. A. D. 880. [*Codex, ii,* 107.]

In 880, Æthelred, duke of Mercia, gives a charter, with the consent and subscription of king Alfred, "+ I Aelfred king have consented and subscribed."

4. A. D. 883. [*Codex, ii,* 110.]

A charter of Aethelred, duke of Mercia, bears the attestation of king Alfred, "+ I Ælfred confirm the munificence of this grant with the sign of the Holy Cross."

The next charter, in Cod. ii, 112, *is otherwise called Alfred's Will.*

5. A. D. 889. [*Codex, ii,* 118.]

[3] INASMUCH as it often happens to some men, and especially during the foul and discordant madness of this present life, that the tide of oblivious iniquity strikes and blunts the simple eye of the thoughtful heart, and the clouds of neglect with dark overlays of depravity obscure from the path of right the radiating star of justice; WHEREFORE it is necessary for every man, that all his acquisitions or possessions, by the aid of writings, for the caution of those now living or hereafter to succeed, such possessions as by catholic or heroic men of either greater or lesser power, have been delivered over to God and his saints through the height of the heavens, should be firmly and duly ratified by their testimony and confirmation, and noted down by the true pen of the writer on parchment. WHEREFORE, in the year 889, since the benignant gem of heavenly light shone through the field of virgin modesty desirable to mankind with the appearance of mystic breathing, in the 7th Indiction, with the beams of the aforesaid brilliancy and

(3) The following charter betrays itself to be a forgery by its bombastic style,—more common in the age of Dunstan and afterwards of the Anglo-Norman monks than in that of king Alfred.

grace shining upon us, I Ælfred king of the Angles and Saxons, and Æthelred under-king and patrician of the Mercians, with the testimony and license or consent of the senators, bishops or dukes of either race, for the relief of my [*mis*]deeds, and to gain the rest of heavenly remuneration, do hereby confer in ecclesiastical right, and give and grant, to Wærfrith, the illustrious bishop of the Wiccii, for the church of Worcester, in London, one court, which, as to its name, is called by the citizens "ad antiquum petrosum ædificium," that is "Æt Hwætmund's stone,"[4] from the public street to the wall of the same city, whose length is 26 perches, and breadth in its upper part is 13 perches and 7 feet, and in its lower part 11 perches and 6 feet, to be possessed for ever in full liberty of the whole matter here-under; and that it may have pot and scale for measuring in buying and selling for their use or necessities, free in all respects, and may remain free from all duties or fiscal penalty, or public duty, save what shall relate from within to the lordship of the bishop of the church of Worcester. But if any of his men shall traffic without or in the public street or on the bank[5] where men buy, according as is right, let toll be paid into the king's hand; but if any one shall buy or sell within in the aforesaid court, let due toll be paid into the hand of the bishop above named; and always, as long as the peoples of the English or Saxons, by faith of the Christian religion, shall be sprinkled with the water of holy baptism, or the city of London shall be fitly subject to the dominion of their authority, let it remain subject to the city of Worcester.

We call to witness and beseech the persons of all men, present or to come, that this our gift may remain inviolate and entire, as the present page testifies. But if any one, as we hope not, inflated with the serpentine poison of devilish suggestion, shall attempt to corrupt in any way the course of this definition, let them know that they shall be pierced through with Anna and Zaphira by the hellish sword of eternal anathema, unless they shall resolve beforehand with due satisfaction to amend their ways. But these are the names of those who have been witnesses

(4) This, possibly, may be the London-stone, still to be seen in Watling Street.

(5) bank 'ripa', bank of the river; where in former times much traffic was carried on under the Anglo-Norman kings, not, as far as we know, in the Anglo-Saxon times. This is a strong proof of the charter being a forgery.

and consentient to this our gift, and, confirming it with the triumphant banner of the holy cross, have subscribed it with their own hands.

+ I Ælfred king of the Angles and Saxons, confirming this gift, subscribe it with the sign of the cross. + I Æthelred underking and patrician of the Mercians have subscribed this gift with the sign of the cross. + I Æthelflæd have consented. + I Uulfred bishop have consented. + I Alhard bishop have consented. + I Uuærfrith bishop have consented. + I Deneuulf bishop have consented. + I Wulfsige bishop have consented.

6. *(no date) Codex ii,* 122, *and iii,* 401.

'*Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ reigns for ever, the king of all ages!* WHEREAS the orbit of this transitory life daily sets and fades; and all the faithful are earnestly admonished by this sign, that, closely following the examples of good works, in the profitable successes of their forefathers' good will, they may in exchange for their worldly goods deserve to obtain the never-ending and unchangeable joys of the kingdom of heaven. WHEREFORE I Aelfred, by favour of Almighty God's mercy king of the English, and ruler of the other provinces lying round about, and governor of the nations, with willing mind grant and confirm a portion of land wherein is a monastery, dedicated, founded, and built, as it appears, under the name of the Holy Trinity, in honor of St Peter prince of the apostles, namely a place, called by a well known name among the English, Ceroteseg, i. e. Cirot's island, and five manses at Thorp, together with all appendages thereto rightly belonging, namely Getinges, Hunewaldesham, and Wudeham, for the maintenance of that monastery and of all who with one mind therein serve God; that those dwelling there may not cease to intercede for my sins and innumerable offences. But let the aforesaid land be as we have appointed, with all things that rightly belong to it, namely fields, woods, meadows, pastures, pools and brooks, free and undisturbed, and stable, firm and unannulled, from every yoke of service. But if any one allured

(6) The authenticity of this charter is doubtful: the first part of the charter is in Latin; the boundaries are in Anglo-Saxon.

by diabolical covetousness shall make null the definition and ratification of this my decree, let him know that he shall render an account at the dreadful judgment, and burn for ever in the avenging flames of hell with Anti-Christ and his followers, and there shall remain eternally, unless he shall have duly enough repented in this present life. Now the land aforesaid is surrounded by these boundaries &c.

This is the land-mark to Certeseye and to Thorpe. That is first on to Waiemuthe; up along the Waie to Waibrugge to the mid-stream; from Waibrugge southward to Boggesley; from Boggeslye by the mid-stream to Wudeham; from Wudeham right-south into Halewik; by the mid-stream; and so forth between the land of Halewik and the land of Wintrede's-hill right-west; and so forth right-west into the foul brook that goeth between Fecingelye and the gallows; and so right-forth to the hoar stone; and from the hoar stone into the dark ford; and so forth right-west along the stream into the moor at east-wood's end: and so up between east-wood and Otershaghe on the hoar thorn; from the hoar thorn to the oak trees; from the oak trees to the three-hills; from the three-hills unto the drain; from the drain unto the march-brook; from the march-brook on to Exlæf's bourn; from Exlæf's bourn to the hoar maple-tree; from the hoar maple-tree to the three-trees; from the three-trees along the deep brook right to weal-gate; from weal-gate on to clear pool right to the foul brook; from the foul brook to the black withy; from the withy right-forth to weales-hythe, along the Temese [Thames] on the other half [side] of Mixtenham; on to the oak between Burgh-island and Mixtenham: along the water right to Nettle-isle; from the isle along the Thames about [round] ox-lake; and so forth along Thames to bores-hill; and so forth along Thames right to Ham-isle; and so forth along stream right by north of Ham-isle; and so forth along Thames by half stream; back on Wayemuthe.

7. A. D. 891, *Aug.* 2. *Codex ii*, 123.

† + I Alfred by the grace of God king of the Anglo-Saxons, at the intercession of my faithful earl named Berhtulf, have given and granted for ever a small piece of land in exchange for another

(7) This and the next three charters are supposed to be spurious.

land, free from all secularities, except marching against the enemy, and building a bridge or a fortress. But the said land is, in quantity, of seventeen manses, lying in two places, at a place called Plyssh of twelve manses, and at a place called Radingtun of five manses. I have therefore received from the aforesaid earl, for those lands, land of the same quantity which the country-people call Suth-tun, near the sea-shore in the district called Dornsetan, and the same land is equally free, as aforesaid. But it is surrounded by these boundaries &c.

The writing of this charter was done in the year of our Lord's incarnation 891, Indiction 7, the 4th day before the nones of August. With the consent of these witnesses, whose names are noted beneath. + I Alvred king have subscribed. + I Berhtulf duke have consented, with many others.

8. A. D. 892. *Codex, ii,* 124, *and iii,* 402.

+ *In the name of the Lord!* I Ælfred by the clemency of Him who sits on high, Creator and Governor of all things, king of the Angol-Saxons, will give and grant for a perpetual inheritance to my faithful earl Æthelhelm, a small piece of land, that is of ten manses in a place called Northniwetune. But the aforesaid piece of land is free from all secularities except marching against an enemy and building bridges or fortresses. These are the territories of the land above mentioned, &c.

First by Afene-stead to Stintesford; then to Rush's-lade; then to Cioltanford; then to Wifelesford; then so along the way to Sand-hill; then to Botanwell; then by the Wiodde; then over the Wiod to the Gore and so back to the Afene.

Rubric. This is the book of the ten hides at Northniwetune that Ælfred booked [enregistered] to Æthelhelm his thane in everlasting inheritance.

The writing of this charter was done in the year of our Lord's incarnation 892, Indiction 10, with the consent of these witnesses whose names are noted beneath.

+ Aelfred king of the Saxons. + Wulfsige bishop. + Wulfred duke. + Æthelred duke. + Eadweard the king's son.

+ John the presbyter. + Waerulf the presbyter. + Deormod th cellarer. + Aelfric the treasurer. + Sigewulf the butler. + Byr stan the soldier. + Berchtmund the soldier. + Wulfsige the so dier. + Aethelm the soldier. + Aethelhelm the soldier. + C wald the soldier. + Uchferth the soldier. + Ocea the soldie + Byrhthelm the soldier.

To those who observe and consent to this our grant, may peac remain for ever, but to those who oppose or endeavour to infring it, be woe! and a portion with the traitor Scariot!

9. *Codex ii*, 124.

In the name of the Lord! I Ælfred by the grace of God king o the Angol-Saxons, with the consent of the venerable household o the church of Maldubia [Malmesbury], give and grant to my faithful minister named Dudig a certain piece of ground, that is f cassates at the same land aforesaid, to have and to hold for hi own days, and to leave after him to three heirs whomsoever h may choose. But after the days of the three heirs, the aforesai land is to return to the church of the Holy Saviour in Maldube [Malmesbury], without any gainsaying, to the same service a formerly. Now the aforesaid land is free from all secularitie except marching against an enemy, and the building of bridge or fortresses.

But the writing of this charter was done, with the consent o the witnesses whose names are written beneath, in the place which is called Maelduburi, but by our name Maeldunesburg.

+ Ego Aelfred king. + Ulfric bishop. + Aethelhelm duke. + Aethelnoth duke. + Aelfhere. + Deormod. + Beorhthelm. + Ceolwulf. + Aetheluuald son of the king. + Beornhard. + Uulfric. + Uuerulf. + Ecgwulf.

10. A. D. 895. *Codex, ii*, 125.

By the power of Almighty God, who reigns for ever, ... by whose might and wisdom all men who come into this world are enlightened, kings and princes are raised aloft, and the kingdoms of peoples are wonderfully dedicated. By this wonderful virtue, and not by my own power, and by the teach-

ing of the benevolent father Leo, the high-priest of all Christians, I have gained battles and conquered kingdoms—not I however, but God who is strong and powerful in battle :—Wherefore I Ælvred king of the Saxons, wish to follow the footsteps of my father Æthelwulf; and, as he ordained that pay should be given for the lighting of St Peter, so I give and grant to his brother saint Andrew, the apostle of God the maker of the world who has condescended to augment my kingdom in these my times, all my land in the town of Frekeham, in the county of Suffolk, and I deliver my land in Yselham to you my faithful Burric bishop of Rochester and to your church to hold for ever, with all its pertinences, marshes, pastures, feedings, meadows, waters, and fisheries and fowleries, and with all my men, serfs and free, and other rights pertaining to the same. For there are 13 acres and 15 manses which are included in these boundaries, &c.

I will and command that this my gift of the lands aforesaid may be free from all royal power for ever, and that no one take refuge in it except the bishop and his successors.

Wherefore I Alvred, by the royal authority and power given to me by God, wish that this my gift may be held firm and lasting by my successors for ever. Nor shall it be lawful for any one to change, take away or diminish this my will and gift ; as he desires to avoid the anger and indignation of Almighty God. But if any one strives to increase it, may God increase for him good days in this world, and merits in the kingdom of the heavens. Now I have made this gift by the counsel of my dear friends Plegmund archbishop and Grimbald priest, in the year of our Lord's incarnation DCCCXCV, for the soul of my father and my brothers, the kings Æthelbald, Æthelberht and Æthelred, who left to me, though unworthy, the royal inheritance. But you, whose names here follow, I have asked to consent and to subscribe at my entreaty and for my love.

And I Plegmund archbishop of Dorobernia [Canterbury] consent and subscribe +. And I Æthelbald archbishop of the church of York consent and subscribe +. I Æthelstan prelate of Hereford consent and subscribe +. I Werbert . . . . . of Legacester [Caerleon] consent and subscribe +. I Tynebert bishop of Lichfield consent and subscribe +. I Herefred minis-

ter of Worcester, consent and affix the sign of the holy cross +. I Ælfstan bishop of London affix the sign of the holy cross +. I Denewulf bishop of the city of Winchester, assent and subscribe +. I Ægelmere minister of Chichester give my assent and subscribe +. I Eadred minister of Northwic [Norwich] consent and affix the sign of the cross +. I Harold minister of Dorchester consent and subscribe +. I Grimbald priest, to the honour of God, consent and affix the sign of the cross +. I John abbot affix the sign of the cross +. I Eadred earl consent and subscribe +. I Æthelred duke of the Gaini subscribe +. I Ælswytha queen consent and subscribe +. I Æthelred duke of the Mercians consent and subscribe +.

11. A. D. 898. *Codex ii*, 128.

In the name of the Lord! I Ælfræd, by the grace of God king of the Saxons, give to my faithful duke Sigilm for a perpetual possession the land of my own right, and of one inhabitant[3] in the place which is called Fearnleag, and in the great *wisce*[4] six acres of meadow in the land on the northward to Eadweald Siebright in consideration of his money; that he may have and hold it as long as he lives, and after his departure from this life may have free power of giving it to whomsoever he pleases. This donation was made in the year after Christ's incarnation 898, at the place which is called Wulfamere, with the consent of these my witnesses whose name appears to be written below:

+ I Ælfred king of the Saxons confirm this my gift with the sign of the holy cross.

+ I Ædweard king, confirm this gift of the king.

+ Duke Ordlaf
+ Duke Sigulf
+ Duke Wullaf
+ Beorhtsige, Officer
+ Osferth, Officer
+ Wulfere, Officer
+ Eadweald, Officer
+ Æthelstan, Priest
+ Cuthulf, Officer
+ Ecgferth, Officer.
+ Eadhelm, Officer

3 Manentis. The same word has occurred before in charter 6, where it is rendered mans. Manens describes the PERSON, mansa the OCCUPATION: but they aim at the same point, the number of families on the estate. 4 Perhaps 'rushes'.

But the land aforesaid appears to be circumscribed by these boundaries, &c.

12. *(no date) Codex, ii,* 130.

[5] Whatever is to be granted by a king's gift to his faithful servants, ought to be fortified by a document in writing, because the frail memory of man fades and the delivery of writings always brings it back to memory. WHEREFORE I Ælfred, king of the Anglo-Saxons, give and grant to my faithful servant named Deormod, one vill of five manses, named Aeppelford, for another piece of land which the inhabitants name Harandun. I therefore deliver and grant it to him on such hereditary right, that after the end of his life, he may deliver it, for a perpetual inheritance, to any one whoever may be his heir, or to any monastery of holy men, as he may think good.

But the aforesaid land shall be free from all secular services, except three, a popular expedition, the building of a high-way bridge and of a royal fortress. But if any one excited by the heat of covetousness, shall attempt to break through this our charter, let him be damned and buried in the lowest hell with the apostle Judas and Pilate, and with all who unjustly possess the sanctuary of God. And let this writing ever have inviolable authority.

I the king first confirm this with my royal seal, and command my faithful servants to be witnesses to its confirmation.

+ The sign of king Aelfred.
+ The sign of Aedward, the king's son.
+ The sign of Deormod the minister.

5 Probably not authentic.

IX.

KING ALFRED'S WILL.

King Alfred's will, in an entire and correct form, was first published, in 1788, under the able superintendence of the Rev. Owen Manning. This edition, printed at the Clarendon Press, in quarto, exhibited the Saxon text, with notes, and no less than three distinct versions, a free English translation, a literal one, and a third in Latin. The original was at that time in the possession of Mr Astle, and had been preserved in a register of the abbey of Newminster, founded at Winchester by Alfred not long before his death.

"This Register," it is stated in the original preface, "commences with an account of the first foundation of the Abbey in the Cemetery on the north-west side of the Cathedral of Winchester, which about the year 1110 was removed to Hyde. The greatest part of the register, and particularly that in which the will is inserted, appears to have been written between the years 1028 and 1032, so that the entry in the register could not have been written later than one hundred and thirty-two years after the foundation of the abbey, though it was probably earlier; and it may reasonably be supposed, that care would be taken by the abbot and convent to exemplify the will of their great and munificent founder, in the most correct manner."

The will itself might be made the text of a far from uninteresting dissertation on antiquarian points of considerable importance. The rights of succession, both regal and concerning private property—the modes of tenure—the gift and maintenance of personal privileges—the forms of bequest—with other circumstances relating to ancient habits and localities—may derive incidental elucidation from this valuable relic. Its disclosures manifest the jealousy with which the Anglo-Saxon monarchs watched and

secured the transmission of their private possessions to their families and friends; it illustrates the commencement of that complicated state of property on which the Norman genius for chicane afterwards impressed a still more vexatious character of intricacy; and it exhibits in a very striking light, the magnanimous forbearance of Alfred under the selfish evasions of his brother, and his anxiety to act justly when himself placed in similar circumstances. It may assist in giving a clearer view of the scope and bearing of this testamentary record, if we insert the former editor's Introductory Remarks.

'It appears, by the Preface or Introduction to this will, that king Ethelwolf left certain manors and other estates in land (besides what he had given them in his life-time) to his three sons Ethelbald, Ethelred, and Alfred, and to the survivor of them.

'That, on Ethelbald's decease, Ethelred and Alfred made over their joint interest herein to king Ethelbert their then eldest brother, in trust, to release it to them again in the same condition in which he received it: with a covenant to do the same by such estates also as he had obtained by their joint assistance and such as he should have acquired himself.

'That, on Ethelbert's decease, and Ethelred's succeeding to the crown, Alfred applied to him in witena-gemot, to make partition of the estates, and to assign him his share: but that Ethelred refused; alledging in his excuse, that it was a mixed property, which he had entered upon at different times, and that he could not easily distinguish the lands one from another:—That however he would make him his heir:—with which declaration Alfred was satisfied.

'That, shortly after, in a witena-gemot at Swinburgh, it was agreed between Ethelred and Alfred, that the survivor should give to the children of the other, 1. All such lands as they two themselves should have acquired; and, 2. All such as Ethelwolf their father had given to them two in Ethelbald's life-time; but not, 3. Those which he had bequeathed by will to the three; which, together with the personal estate of him of the two that should die first, was to go to the survivor.

'That finally, therefore, this third sort of lands, viz. such as King Ethelwolf the father had devised by will to the three brothers and the survivor of them, and which had now devolved on Alfred, was the subject of the following bequest; which, in the witena-gemot at Langden (King Ethelwolf's will being first produced and read) it was unanimously agreed that Alfred had un-

doubted authority to make; and which the nobility there assembled pledged themselves to see carried into execution.'

Independently of the wish to render generally accessible an important illustration of English history, we may advert to the general interest that has been recently awakened to every thing connected with the literature of the Anglo-Saxons. The singularly clear and comprehensive grammatical elucidations of Dr Bosworth have rendered the access easy, and even attractive; and it may be hoped that henceforward a knowledge not only of the acts and institutions of our ancestors, but of their habits of thought and expression, will be considered as amongst the indispensable elements of a liberal education. The true genius of our tongue, the legitimate clue to its richest treasures, can never be ascertained but by ascending to its source. Shakespeare and the giants of Shakespeare's day, are only to be adequately understood by the man who has traced up the derivation of that unrivalled medium, through which their feelings and conceptions have been transmitted to these later times.—Langland also, Chaucer, Wycliff, cannot be fairly estimated, nor, indeed, satisfactorily comprehended, but by readers who have secured a competent acquaintance with the Anglo-Saxon idiom. Were it not for the risk of lapsing into protracted dissertation, reference might be made to the value of these studies to all who would trace the history of English law up to its primary sources, and to those who would examine our national annals in their earliest and least contaminated authorities—but enough has been said in explanation of the present publication, and from more protracted comment we are withheld by considerations of expediency.

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1. I Ælfred king, with God's grace, and with the counsel of Ætherede [1] archbishop, and all the West-Saxon witan's witness, have considered about my soul's health, and about my inheritance that God and my elders gave me, and about that inheritance which king Athulf [2] my father bequeathed to us three brothers, Athel-

(1) Ethelred, archbishop of Canterbury; who died A. D. 888.

(2) Ethelwolf, the father of Alfred, died Jan. 13, A. D. 857-8, leaving four sons, 1. Ethelbald, 2. Ethelbert, 3. Ethelred, 4. Alfred, who were successively kings of England; and one daughter, Ethelswith, who, in 851, married Burhred king of Mercia; and, after his death in 874, became a nun at Padua, where she died in 888. See Harmony of the Chron.

bolde, and Ætherede, and me[3]; and which of us soever were longest, that he should take to all.

2. But it came to pass that Æthelbold[4] died; and we two Æthered [*and*[5] *I*] with all the West-Saxon witan's witness, our part did give in trust to Æthelbyrhte[6] king our brother, on the condition that he should re-deliver it to us as entire as it then was when we did make it over to him. And he then did so, both by that estate, and that which he by our joint concurrence had obtained, and what he himself had acquired.

3. When it so happened that Æthered[7] succeeded, then prayed I him before our nobles all, that we two the inheritance might divide: and he would give to me my share. Then said he to me, that he might not easily divide, for that he had, at many different times, formerly taken possession. And he said concerning that which he enjoyed of our joint property, and [*that which*[8] *he*] had acquired, after his days, he would give it to no man rather than to me. And I there-with, at that time, was well satisfied.

4. But it came to pass that we all by the heathen folk[9] despoiled were. Then discoursed we concerning our children that they would need some support to be given by us out of these estates, as to us was given. Then were we in council at Swinbeorg[10]; when we two declared, in the West-Saxon nobles' presence, that which soever of us two were longest liver, that he should give to the other's children those lands that we two ourselves had acquired, and those lands that Athulf the king gave to us two

(3) K. Ethelwolf made no mention, in his will, of his second son Ethelbert, having, in his life-time (on the death of Athelstan uncle of Ethelbert), in 851, given him the kingdom of the South-Saxons, East-Saxons, and Kent.

(4) Ethelbald, the eldest brother of Alfred, died Dec. 20, A. D. 860.

(5) The words AND IC seem to be wanting in the original.

(6) Who succeeded to the kingdom on the death of Ethelbald, A. D. 860; and was now the eldest surviving brother of the three.

(7) Ethelred succeeded to the throne on the death of Ethelbert, A. D. 866.

(8) The words 'thæs the he,' though not expressed in the original, must be understood as absolutely necessary to enable the reader to distinguish between the two species of estate here mentioned, 1. that which Ethelred was seised of by joint heirship with Alfred, and, 2. that which he had acquired himself.

(9) The whole reign of this prince was one continued war with the Danes, who are here meant by the 'hæthen folc.'

(10) I find no place of this name at present in England.

while Æthelbolde was living; except those that he to us three brothers bequeathed. And of this, each of us two to the other his security did give, that whether of us two should live longest, he should take both to the land and to the treasures; and to all his possessions, except that part, which either of us to his children should bequeath.

5. But it came to pass that Æthered[1] the king deceased, when no man communicated to me no title-deed, nor no evidence, that it was any other than as we before had agreed it before witness. Then heard we now of many inheritance-suits. Now therefore brought I Athulf the king's will into our council at Langadene;[2] and they read it before all the West-saxon nobles. When it was read, then prayed I them all for my love (and to them my security gave, that I would never bear ill will to none of them for that they should speak right) that none of them wonld neglect, neither for my love nor for my fear, that they should declare the common right; lest any man should say, that I had wrongfully excluded my kinsfolk, whether elder or younger. And they then all for right pronounced and declared, that they could conceive no more rightful title nor hear of in a title-deed. "Now *(said they)* it is all delivered there into thy hand: Wherefore thou mayest bequeath and give it, either to a relation or a stranger, as may be to thee most eligible." And they all thereupon gave their security to me and their hand-setting, that, during their life, no man ever should pervert it in none other wise but so as I my self should direct it on the next day.

6. I Alfred, of the West-Saxons[3] King, by God's grace, and before this company of witnesses, declare how I will concerning my estates after my day.

7. First I give to Eadweard[4] my eldest son the land at Strætneat[5]

(1) King Ethelred died Apr. 23, A. D. 871; when Alfred succeeded to the crown.

(2) There are diverse places in England of the name of Langdon and Longdon; but which of them this was, it is impossible to say. If this point should be settled, and the time at which the council was holden, we could ascertain the date of the will as well as the place at which it was made.

(3) Alfred being king at the time he made his will, it must have been made between A. D. 871, when he came to the crown, and A. D. 885, in which bishop Esne, one of the legatees therein mentioned, died.

(4) Edward, the eldest son of Alfred, was born a little before his father ascended the throne; and afterwards succeeded him therein, by the name of Edward the Elder.

(5) Probably Stratton in Cornwall. See the next note.

in Tricon-shire,[6] and Heortigtune,[7] and the book-land all that Leofheah holds, and the land at Carumtune,[8] and at Cylfantune,[9] and at Burnhamme,[10] and at Wedmor.[1] And I am a petitioner to the families[2] at Ceodre, that they would chuse him on the condition that we had formerly expressed; with the land of Ciwtune,[3] and that which thereto belongeth. And I to him give the land at Cantuctune,[4] and at Bedewind,[5] and at Pefesigge,[6] and Hysseburn,[7] and at Suttune,[8] and at Leodride,[9] and at Aweltune.[10]

8. And all the book-land that I in Cent [*Kent*] have, and at the Nether Hysseburn,[1] and at Cyseldene,[2] let it be given to Wintanceastre [*Winchester,*] on the condition on which my Father formerly gave it; and that my private estate which I gave to Ecgulf in trust at the Nether Hysseburn.

(6) I take Tricon-shire to have been, without all doubt, Cornwall; it being but a small Saxon variation from Trigshire, as it was called by the British inhabitants. See Borlase's Cornish Vocabulary.

(7) Perhaps Hardington in Co. Som. as most of the lands here bequeathed are in that County or Wilts.

(8) Carhampton, Co. Som.

(9) Chilhampton, Co. Wilt.

(10) Burnham, Co. Som.

(1) Wedmore, Co. Som.

(2) These "Families," at Cheddar, in Somersetshire, were the Ceorls, who occupied the tenemental lands there. They were so far analogous to those who, in the succeeding feudal times, were called privileged villains, as that they could not be compelled to hold their lands against their own consent. Hence it was that Alfred had stipulated with them, on the ground of a requisition on his part, to chuse Edward his son to be their landlord; i. e. to continue his tenants after he himself should be dead and gone.

(3) Chewton, Co. Som.

(4) Quantock, Co. Som.

(5) Bedwin, Co. Wilt.

(6) Pewsey, Co. Wilt.

(7) Hussebourn, Co. Hant.

(8) There are so many places in England of the name of Sutton, that it is hard to say which of them is here meant; but, doubtless, one of those of this name in Somersetshire or Wilts.

(9) Probably Lethered in Surrey.

(10) I take this to have been Aulton in Wilts, which was given by some of his successors to the Cathedral of Winchester, Cart. 29. E. 1. n. 54. For Aulton in Hants seems to have been given to that church by Egbert the grandfather of Alfred. Dug. Mon. I. 979. Yet Camden takes it for granted to have been Aulton in Hants; and, following the printed Latin Translation of the will, says, that Alfred gave it to the keeper of Leodre. Edit. Gibs. p. 146.

(1) Nether Hussebourn in Hants; which was afterwards given by Edward to the cathedral of Winchester.

(2) Chiseldon or Chistleton in Wilts; which was given to the old Foundation at Winchester for the present; but, as it seems, for the benefit of his intended New Minster, at that place, which appears to have been possessed of it in 4 Edw. iii. Rom. 4. E. 3. m. 4. apud Tann. Notit. p. 156.

9. And to my younger son [3] the land at Eaderingtune [4] and that at Dene,[5] and at Meone,[6] and at Ambresbyry,[7] and at Deone,[8] and at Sturemynster,[9] and at Gifle,[10] and at Cruærn,[1] and at Whitchurch,[2] and at Axanmouth,[3] and at Brancescumbe, and at Columtune, and at Twyfyrd,[4] and at Mylenburn,[5] and at Exanmynster,[6] and at Sutheswyrth,[7] and at Liwtune,[8] and the lands that thereto belong; which are all that I in Weal district[9] have, except Triconshire.

10. And to my eldest daughter[10] the manor at Welewe.

11. And to the middlemost [1] [*that*] at Cleare, [2] and at Cendefer. [3]

(3) This younger son of Alfred was Ethelward, born about A. D. 880. He was educated at Oxford, became a very learned man, and died 16 Oct. A. D. 922.

(4) Adrington, Co. Som.

(5) There are places of this name both in Hants and Wilts, as well as in many other counties. But I take it to have been in one of those two, as most of the estates here bequeathed lay among the West-Saxons.

(6) East and West-Meon, Co. Hant.

(7) Ambresbury, Co. Wilt.

(8) Down. Co. Dors. or Devon.

(9) Sturminster, Co. Dors.

(10) Gidley, Co. Devon.

(1) Crewkern, Co. Som.

(2) Whitchurch Canonicorum, Co. Dorset.

(3) Axmouth, Branscomb, Columbton, Co. Devon.

(4) Twyford, Co. Hant.

(5) Milbourn, Co. Dors. or Som.

(6) Axminster, Co. Devon.

(7) Of this I find nothing.

(8) Litten, of which there is one in Dorset, and one in Somerset.

(9) "On wealcynne." The author of the printed Translation hath rendered this "sub cœlo," as if Alfred had meant to say, under the Welkin. But, besides that this word is always written, in the Saxon language, weolcen, wolcen, or welcn, the very termination, cynne, naturally refers us to some district. The only question is, What that district was? —Now the Britons, who retired into the west of England, were called, by our Saxon ancestors, wealas, and their Tribes, weala cynne, i. e. Britannorum gentes. The word indeed, is, at present, retained in the name of those only who retired to the extremity of the island, who are to this day called Corn-wealas. But this does not hinder but that it might formerly extend farther. Nay, the prefix, Corn, applied to one set of the wealas, seems to imply that there were other wealas besides these, and bordering upon them. Accordingly, I suppose that, by a latitude peculiar to common speech, the inhabitants of Devon, or even of Somersetshire, might be called wealas also: And that, therefore, when Alfred had bequeathed his estates in these parts, he finished with saying, "Which are all that I have in the west of England, except in Cornwall." And, as a proof of this, it is observable, that none of the lands hereafter bequeathed are farther west than Wiltshire.

(10) His eldest daughter was Ethelfleda, who married Ethelred, earl of Mercia; after whose death, A. D. 912, she governed that province till her own decease, 15 June A. D. 919. Welewe is Wellow, Co. Hant.

(1) His middlemost daughter, as he calls her, was Ethelgeda, a Nun, and afterwards Abbess of Shaftsbury, where she died and was buried.

(2) King's Clere, Co. Hant.

(3) Probably one of those places in Hampshire which still bear this addition to their Name. viz. Preston-Candever, Chilton-Candever.

12. And to the youngest,[4] the Manor at Welig, [5] and at Æsctune,[6] and at Cippanhamme.[7]

13. And to Æthelme,[8] my brother's son, the Manor at Ealdingburn,[9] and at Cumtune,[10] and at Crundell,[1] and at Beading,[2] and at Beadinghamme, and at Burnham, and at Thunresfield,[3] and at Æsceng.[4]

14. And to Athelwold,[5] my brother's son, the Manor at Godelming,[6] and at Gyldeford, and at Stening.[7]

15. And to Osferthe,[8] my cousin, the Manor at Beccanlea,[9] and at Rytherfield, and at Dicceling, and at Suthtune, and at Lullingminster, and at Angmering, and at Felham, and the lands that thereto belong.

16. And to Ealhswith,[10] the Manor at Lamburn,[1] and at Waneting, and at Ethandune.[2]

17. And to my two sons, one thousand pounds; to each five hundred pounds.

18. And to my eldest daughter, and to the middlemost, and to the youngest, and to Ealhswith, to them four, four hundred pounds; to each one hundred pounds.

(4) The youngest daughter of Alfred was Elfrida, who married Baldwin II, earl of Flanders; and dying 7 Jun. A. 929, was buried in the Monastery of St Peter at Ghent.

(5) Willey, Co. Wilt. (6) Ashton, Co. Wilt.

(7) Chippenham, Co. Wilt.

(8) Æthelm, the eldest son of K. Ethelbert elder brother of Alfred.

(9) Aldingbourn, Co. Sussex. (10) Compton, Co. Sussex.

(1) Crundal, Co. Hant. (2) Beden, Bedingham, and Barnham, Co. Sussex.

(3) I take this to have been the Manor of Thunderfield in the parish of Horsey, near Reygate in Surrey, where was formerly a castle of considerable strength.

(4) Probably Eashing in the parish of Godalming in Surrey, the manor of which also belonged to Alfred.

(5) Ethelwold, the youngest son of king Ethelbert elder brother of Alfred, who died in arms against Edward his cousin, the son and successor of Alfred, A. D. 905.

(6) Godalming and Guildford, both in Surrey.

(7) Steyning in Sussex.

(8) Who this Osferth his cousin was, I do not find.

(9) Beckley, Rotherfield, and Dichling, Sutton, Lullington, Angmering, and Felpham, all in Sussex.

(10) Ethelswitha was the wife of Alfred, and daughter of Ethelred the Big, earl of Mercia. She survived her husband four years; and, dying A. D. 904, was buried in the nunnery at Winchester of her own foundation.

(1) Lamburn and Waneting, now Lambourn and Wantage in Berks, at the latter of which king Alfred was born.

(2) Edingdon, near Westbury in Wilts, where Alfred defeated the Danes, A. D. 878.

19. And to each of my Aldermen one hundred Mancuses; [3] and to Æthelme, and Athelwolde, and Osferthe also.

20. And to Ætherede the Alderman, a sword of an hundred Mancuses.

21. And to the men that follow me, to whom I now at Eastertide gave money, two huudred pounds. Let them give to them, and divide between them, to each as they shall judge to him to belong; after the manner that I have now distributed to them.

22. And to the Archbishop, [4] one hundred Mancuses, and to Esne [5] Bishop, and to Werferthe [6] Bishop, and to the [*Bishop*] at Schireburn.

23. Also, let them distribute for me and for my father, and for the friends that he interceded for, and I intercede for, two hundred pounds; fifty to the Mass-priests over all my kingdom; fifty to the poor Ministers of God; fifty to the distressed poor; fifty to the Church that I shall rest at. And I know not certainly whether of the money is so much; nor I know not but that may be more thereof; but so I suppose. If it be more, be it all common to them to whom I have bequeathed money. And

(3) Mancuses.] Mr Manning says "the mancus was about 7s. 6d. of our present currency." This may be correct; but the precise grounds of every valuation of ancient money in modern currency should be stated. Mr Turner, in his History of the Anglo-Saxons, Vol. II. p. 468, (4th edit.) quotes a passage from Elfric, which asserts that five pennies made one shilling, and thirty pennies one mancus. This, as he observes, "would make the mancus six shillings," which is not very far from its value in "present currency" according to Mr Manning's calculation. But it must be recollected that these were Anglo-Saxon pennies and shillings, the relative value of which to commodities was very different from that of our modern pence and shillings. Mr Turner supposes that two sorts of pennies were the only coins of the Anglo-Saxons above their copper coinage; and that all their other denominations of money (including the mancus) are to be regarded as "weighed or settled quanties of uncoined metal."

(4) Ethelred Archbishop of Canterbury, who died A. D. 888.

(5) Esne, Bishop of Hereford; who died, according to Godwin, A. D. 885. Indeed Stevens and Willis place him a century higher. But as a Bishop Esne is here expressly mentioned as a legatee, and no other of that name occurs in the whole catalogue of bishops, it seems a full proof that Godwin is right in the point of chronology.

(6) Werferth was Bishop of Worcester, a Man of singular Learning, and employed by Alfred in translating the Dialogues of Pope Gregory I into the Saxon language. He died, according to some, A. 911, according to others, A. 915.

(7) The Bishop of Sherborne was Asser, the great friend and favorite of Alfred; and who also wrote the Annals of his Reign down to the year 888. He died, according to the

I will that my Aldermen and my Ministers all be there together and thus distribute this.

24. When I had formerly in other wise disposed in writing of my inheritance, then I had more estate, and more relations: and had intrusted to many men the writings; and in the same company of witnesses they were written. But I have now burned those old *ones* that I might by inquiry recover. If of these any should be found, let it stand for nothing; for that I will that it now thus be by God's assistance.

25. And I will the men that shall have the lands, to fulfil the words that do stand in my Father's Testament, so as they soonest may.

26. And I will, if I to any man have not paid any money, that my relations at least repay that.

27. And I will the men to whom I have bequeathed my book-land, that they do not give it from my kindred after their day: But I will [*after*][8] their day, that it go unto the nighest hand to me; unless any one of them have children; then it is to me most eligible that it go to that issue on the male side, the while that any of it be worthy. My grandfather hath bequeathed his land to the spear-side, and not to the spindle-side.[9] Wherefore, if I have given to any female what he had acquired, then let my relations redeem it, if they will have it while she is living: if it otherwise be, let it go after their day, so as we have before determined. For this reason I ordain that they pay for it, because they will succeed to my [*Estate*] that I may give, or to female hand, or to male hand, whether I will.

28. And I beseech, in God's name, and in his Saints', that none of my relations, nor none of my heirs, do obstruct none of the

most probable accounts, A. 909, or 910. See Fra. Wise de vita et scriptis Asserii, §. 12, prefixed to his Edition of Asser's Annals of Alfred.

(8) The Word OFER, in modern English AFTER, seems to be wanting here.

(9) Spere healfe..... Spinl healfe. The Sexes are here denominated from the implements peculiar to their respective occupations; the Male from the Spear, the Female from the Spindle. And hence, I cannot but think it probable, that the word wæpned, signifying also masculine (though derived, by the Authors of our Vocabularies, from wæpen, which they suppose to have been a Saxon Word corresponding to the veretrum of the Latins) has its Origin in the Word wæpen as it signifies Arms: and is therefore only applied to the male Sex, as the particular Weapon, the Spear was, because it was the only Sex that bore Arms.

freedom [10] of those that I have redeemed. And for me the West-Saxon Nobles have pronounced as lawful that I may leave them either free or bond, whether I will. But I, for God's love, and for my soul's advantage, will that they be masters of their freedom, and of their Will; and I, in the living God's name, intreat that no men do not disturb them, neither by money-exaction, nor by no manner of means, that they may not choose [1] such man as they will.

29. And I will that they restore to the families at Domerham [2] their land-deeds, and their free liberty such person to chuse, as to them may be most agreeable; for me, and for Elfleda, [3] and for the friends that she did intercede for, and I do intercede for.

30. And seek they [4] also, with a living price, for my soul's health, as it may be, and as it also is fitting; and as ye to forgive me shall be disposed.

(10) CYRELIF. The latter part of this compound, lif, is put for leaf: and the whole word, cyrelif, is as much as to say "arbitrii licentiam," i. e. the liberty of disposing of themselves.

(1) Alfred, having manumitted diverse theowas, and put them into the condition of ceorles, desires that his Heirs would not abridge them of that Liberty, but leave them to chuse such man for their landlord as they would; which all ceorles, by the Saxon Constitution, might do.

(2) The hiwas of Domerham were the same sort of People with those of Chedder, spoken of in a former Note, viz. The Ceorles who occupied the tenemental Lands there, which they might relinquish when they pleased. And as they were intreated, in that instance, to chuse Edward for their Lord, i. e. to continue to occupy those Lands under him, as they had done under Alfred: so here, the Heirs are required to leave those of Domerham to chuse such Man for their Landlord, as they would; i. e. to continue to occupy those Lands, or relinquish them as they should think proper. Domra hamme, The Manor of Dummer, Co. Hant.

(3) His eldest daughter.

(4) SEC MAN, "Let them seek," or, make application to, namely God. On cwicum ceape, "With a living Price;" viz. By prayer and intercession, and the usual offices of devotion.

X.

TABULAR VIEW

OF THE

Decline and Fall of the Heptarchy,

IN THE LIFE-TIME OF KING ALFRED.

The table on the other side of this leaf, shows the names of the kings, who briefly and irregularly governed the kingdoms of the Heptarchy between the years 849 and 901. A few remarks on each kingdom in turn will assist the reader in forming a competent synchronistic view.

1. Wessex:—This powerful state, after having resisted its rivals, of the Heptarchy, alone stood firm against the fierce invasions of the Danes, under its five successive monarchs, Ethelwolf, Ethelbald, Ethelbert, Ethelred and Alfred.

2. 3. 4. Kent, Essex, and Sussex—All these three minor kingdoms were subjugated by Egbert, and thrown into one: they were then formed into a separate kingdom, subordinate to Wessex, and given generally as an appanage to the king's son, but after Ethelbert, these three provinces were finally united to Wessex.

5. East Anglia. Edmund, commonly called St Edmund, from his martyrdom by the Danes [See Harmony of the Chronicles, page 41] was the last Saxon king of this province. After the battle of Edington, Guthrum the Dane was allowed still to hold it; but after his death, and the reign of an obscure Eric, it was united by slow degrees, in consequence of the turbulent spirit of its Danish occupants, to Wessex.

6. Mercia. Berthwolf and Burrhed were successively the last Saxon kings of Mercia. The Danes overran the province in 874, and made Ceolwolf a tributary king, and base agent of their own rapine. Mercia appears a few years afterwards, as an earldom, governed, at one time, by the "Lady of the Mercians."

7. Northumberland, harassed by the rivalry of Osbert and Ella, who competed for its rule, was amused rather than go-

verned, by the weak princes Egbert I, Rigsig, and Egbert II. The romantic story of the elevation of Guthred—a Saxon peasant-boy—to the sovereignty, is the last act of Northumbria as an independent state. It slowly was joined to Wessex, and the earl of Northumberland still represents its ancient kings.

Year	Wessex.		Kent, Es. & Sus.		East Anglia.		Mercia.		Northumberland
849	ETHELWOLF	10					BERTHWOLF	11	
850		11						12	
1		12						13	
2		13					BURRHED	1	
3		14						2	
4		15						3	
5		16			EDMUND	1		4	
6		17						5	
7		18				2		6	
8	ETHELBALD	1	ETHELBERT	1		3		7	
9		2		2		4		8	OSBERT
860	ETHELBERT	1				5		9	
1		2				6		10	
2		3				7		11	
3		4				8		12	ELLA
4		5				9		13	
5		6				10		14	
6	ETHELRED	1				11		15	
7		2				12		16	EGBERT I
8		3				13		17	
9		4				14		18	
870		5				15		19	
1	ALFRED	1						20	
2		2						21	
3		3						22	RIGSIG
4		4					CEOLWOLF	1	
5		5						2	
6		6						3	EGBERT II
7		7						4	
8		8			GUTHRUM OR	1		5	
9		9			ETHELSTAN	2			
880		10				3			GUTHRED
1		11				4			
2		12				5			
3		13				6			
4		14				7			
5		15				8			
6		16				9			
7		17				10			
8		18				11			
9		19				12			
890		20			ERIC	1			
1		21				2			
2		22				3			
3		23				4			
4		24				5			GUTHRED dies
5		25				6			
6		26				7			
7		27				8			
8		28				9			
9		29				10			
900		30				11			
901		31				12			

XI.

DOMESTIC MANNERS AND HABITS

OF

The Anglo-Saxons.

It is only of late years that our Anglo-Saxon ancestors have had an interest for any but a few secluded scholars, who, as a natural result of such studies, forgot the present in the past, and seemed to imagine that sound knowlege, like wholesome food, required no seasoning to make it palatable. The general idea was,—so far as the public could be said to think at all upon the subject,—that the Anglo-Saxons were a rude and barbarous race, with whom we had no more real concern than with the savages of North America. Rude they certainly were, and perhaps even barbarous, when compared with the Roman civilization of the same period; but amidst all this barbarity and all this rudeness it has come at length to be discovered that there was much in their habits and manners, the knowledge of which would well repay the trouble of enquiry. Percy, the venerable bishop of Dromore, was the first to show us that our early ancestors, with their long cloaks and flowing beards, were not so undesirable acquaintances as the world in its ignorance had imagined. He was soon followed by Strutt, an antiquary of deeper research and profounder knowledge of the subject, but without the genius of Percy, or that almost magical power he possessed, in common with Scott and George Ellis, of infusing life into the dry bones of antiquity. Then came Sharon Turner, who may justly be styled the father of Anglo-Saxon lore, in reference to the present times. Since his day, although the sources of our information remain almost as

scanty as ever, yet the more philosophical way of using them has led to a very great extension of results. It is evident that the Anglo-Saxon scholars are now in the right road, and that every step they take is really and truly a step in advance, and not, as it had often been before, a mere laborious wandering from the end they had in view. Our present object however will rather be to simplify and condense the materials thus provided than to follow in the path they have so happily struck out; but before proceeding to treat of the Manners and Domestic Habits of the Anglo-Saxons, it may not be amiss to say a few words in respect to this noble branch of the Gothic race, previously to their establishing themselves in Britain.

At an early period the Saxones were a people of no great importance, inhabiting lands on the north side of the Elbe, on the neck of the Cimbric Chersonesus, and three small islands at the mouth of the same river. But in process of time we find them forming a great confederation, that extended, when at its height, from the Elbe to the Rhine. At this period, as well as for a long time after their settlement in Britain, the Saxons were heathens, addicted to war, and more inclined to live by plundering others than by their own labours. Still we have good authority for saying that when the German tribes first engaged the attention of the Romans, they had long been reclaimed from the state of hunters, fishers, or wandering herdsmen, and assembled for the most part in villages, where they occupied themselves with agriculture and with the pasturing of cattle. At the same time it must be obvious that they sowed and reaped for their own use only, since they had no commerce, nor from their own habits were likely to have a peaceful neighbourhood, desirous of the interchange of produce.

A variety of causes, which it comes not within the limits of this essay to discuss, made them at length as terrible by sea as they had hitherto been by land. They were now able to contend with the veteran fleets of Rome, and ravaged the whole line of her sea-coast with a fury that often proved irresistible, being much the same sort of scourge to them that the North-men of a later age were to the shores, and even to the inland parts of France.

It was reserved for the genius of the great Charlemagne to arrest their progress, when, as it would seem, these ferocious warriors were on the high road to the conquest of all Germany. From that time they have dwindled down into an inferior, but still warlike, power. But at present we have to notice them before their power was broken.

Like the Danes afterwards, such was their insensibility to danger or the little value they set on life, that they preferred embarking in storm and tempest for these piratical expeditions to waiting for more favourable seasons, since their attack was less likely to be expected in rough weather, and they would thus have a better chance of taking their victims by surprize. With a like indifference to danger, the barks they used on these occasions were no more than frames of osier-work covered with skins sowed together, though they had acquired from the Romans the art of building larger vessels, and more suited to the perils of the wintry ocean. But then these osier-skiffs,—for they evidently deserved no better name,—were of so light a draught that no coast was too shallow, no river too small for them. They could thus ascend the stream for eighty or a hundred miles, and if beaten back could easily retreat again to the open sea whither they were little likely to be followed. Policy must have led to the adoption of this dangerous class of boats, for Holsatia abounded with timber, had they chosen to make use of it.

Such were their habits till about the time usually assigned for the invasion of the island by Hengist, and though much of the legend connected with him has been disputed by recent writers, it seems plain enough that it was not till after a long and tedious struggle that the Saxon invaders obtained a permanent settlement in Britain When that had once been effected, other invaders followed with similar views, led either by like habits, or by invitation from their countrymen already established there, who had conquered as much ground as they could well occupy, and were glad to avoid the pressure of the still unsubdued natives by having their own countrymen for neighbours. Perhaps both contributed to this result. At all events it was not long before the first Saxon settlers were followed by the nation of the Angles in Sleswick, who landed

on the eastern side of the island. And here occurs another anomaly, which has never been sufficiently explained. Although the Angles were far less numerous than the Saxons, their name took precedence in the general title given to the conquerors—Anglo-Saxons—and finally became that of the whole island—Anglia or England, the land of the Angles.

On the early habits of the Anglo-Saxons we may come to a tolerably safe conclusion by referring to the scanty notices that yet remain of them when in the original land of their ancestors. In all probability their first dwellings were little better than huts formed of stakes and osiers, daubed over with clay, for such were their churches, palaces, and public structures. By degrees, though we can no longer trace with distinctness the various stages of improvement, the houses of the better sort were faced at the corners with stone or brick, with which also the arches of their windows were ornamented. In fact stone was more commonly employed than brick, the making of which must have been a work of much time and labour with their imperfect means of manufacture.

But although the Saxons upon their landing in Britain, and for a long time afterwards, were unquestionably barbarians, there can be little doubt that they effected the same wholesome change upon the Romanized Britons of the island,—if we may be allowed the expression,—that they had before produced upon the Romans themselves, when they first terrified the imperial city by their appearance at its gates. To say nothing of their infusing fresh life and vigour into a degenerate race, it is quite certain that they were in the right road with regard both to morals and government. In the chaos of their barbarism were the elements of a better and freer form of society than the Romans had ever known or ever could know upon their principles; the notions of the Saxons only required development to arrive at a very different conclusion. This freedom of course, till the two races were amalgamated, was only for the conquerors; they made the commonalty of the island their slaves, and, abandoning their piratical habits, from sanguinary robbers became territorial chieftains.

Such were the people whom we must now consider as they were established over a large portion of the island, and it is their

domestic habits and manners that we would bring before the reader, after they had become converts to Christianity.

The simplest, and therefore the clearest mode of exhibiting Anglo-Saxon society, will be by showing the individual as he appeared in the first stage of existence, and following him onwards until he forms one of the aggregate.

According to the religious ceremonial of the early ages, the Anglo-Saxon children were baptized by immersion within thirty days after their birth. The relation of god-father to the infant, which kings often took upon themselves, was one of peculiar sanctity, and held by their laws in such veneration that an especial punishment was inflicted upon him who slew the god-child or god-father of another. With the end of the seventh year terminated the period of infancy, that of childhood beginning with the eighth. Leaping, running, wrestling, and a variety of athletic games, more or less analogous to the sports of boys in our own days, were the amusement, and it may almost be said, the occupation, of this period, for reading and writing were by no means usual accomplishments even among the highest classes.

The time between childhood and manhood was distinguished by the term *cnighthood*, that is *knighthood*, a compound word strongly expressive of the subjection in which the Anglo-Saxon youth were kept by their parents, for *cnight* was also used to designate a servant, and indeed we have examples of the son ministering to his father's guests, and even to their servants. At this age one of their chief amusements would seem to have been horse-racing, not as a matter of gambling, but as a trial of their own skill and the swiftness of their horses.

At the age of thirteen the youths of the better sort would begin to prepare themselves for arms, but manhood could hardly be said to commence until the age of fifteen. Up to that time the father might, and often did, under the pressure of necessity, sell his son to a state of servitude ; subsequent to it, the youth, if he chose it, could become a monk ; and at the same age the daughter, who had hitherto been at her father's disposal, could no

longer be married against her inclination. Such at least are the limits we find prescribed to paternal authority in 668 by Theodore, the second archbishop of Canterbury, although these customs no doubt underwent many variations, of which we are unable to fix precisely either the commencement or the end, the habits of one age mingling too closely with those of another for any exact boundary lines to be established. If the father died before his children had arrived at maturity, the care of them was entrusted to the mother, who for their maintenance was allowed six shillings, besides a cow in summer and an ox in winter. The relations however occupied the seat of honour in the house until the eldest boy became of age, when he assumed his father's station on the *frum-stol*, or head-seat, as being the natural head of the family.

The rude education thus briefly sketched, and which included not the slightest knowledge of writing or reading, was the general lot even amongst the highest classes. Few of the Anglo-Saxon chiefs at this early period had the slightest wish to learn themselves, or to have their children educated. Those, who had the sense to march in advance of the age in which they lived, and "would not be like the stupid animals who knew nothing but their grass and water," sent their sons to the monasteries, the clergy being the only part of the community capable of giving instruction; and even amongst them were many that could not read. The youth entrusted to their care naturally led a very different life from those of the same age under the circumstances already noticed. Their most important avocations were study and joining in the performance of the church duties, every thing else being subordinate to these primary considerations. Yet it does not seem likely that even in the cloister all attention to the habits implied in the future destination of the pupil would be neglected. We can hardly imagine that a youth, who from the first was intended to bear a prominent part in the field as well as in the council, should have been brought up by the sagacious monks in total ignorance of those arts which were indispensable to his station. How could we reconcile such a system with what we are told of Wilfred, a bishop who flourished in the eighth century?—"Princes and noblemen," says the biographer, "sent their children to him to be brought up that they might be dedicated to God if they should choose it; or that, when full grown, he might present them in armour to the king if they preferred it."

CALIFORNIA

The studies pursued in the cloister, and at a later period in the schools, could not have been of a very extensive nature. Eloquence was particularly enjoined the high-born youths that they might become a safeguard and defender of those whom they valued. The classics also formed a part of the monastic system of education, and indeed the most valuable, however limited in these matters might be the taste and knowledge of the pious brethren. The pupils rose at the sound of the morning-bell, or, as it is termed by the Saxon writers, the knell. In case they over-slept themselves, the master was at hand to rouse them up with the rod, the discipline of the monks being strict, if not absolutely stern. Upon more than one occasion Alcuin commends the brethren for the free use of the scourge, terming it "the discipline of paternal castigation," by which, as he declares, he himself had greatly profited, having been brought by it to the perfect age of manhood.

It is now time to quit the Saxon as a youth, whether brought up at home, in a school, or in a monastery, and to consider the general habits of the people.

In respect to food the Anglo-Saxons at all times more regarded quantity than quality, as being rather gluttons than epicures. The chief article at their tables was pork, which was abundantly supplied, and at little cost or trouble, the immense forests of oak and beechwood, that covered the island, affording food and shelter to their numerous herds of swine. So valuable indeed were these animals considered that to give or bequeath a hundred head of them was esteemed a valuable donation: they had also, in more or less abundance, sheep, goats, cows, deer, hares, and fowls. Towards the end of Autumn they killed and salted large quantities of cattle for winter consumption, and it seems not unlikely that salted meat in a great measure formed their subsistence until the return of spring, so far at least as the individual was rich enough to afford the use of meat at all. At one time they did not disdain to eat horse flesh; but this custom passed away with other barbarities; nor could flesh of any kind have been a very general diet except at an early period when population was scanty, and both game and cattle in proportion abundant. As the people encreased in numbers and agriculture became more extensive, a meat diet must in a great measure have been confined to the

richer classes; indeed it seems reasonable to believe that the improved cultivation of the soil, as it supplied augmented means of subsistence, was itself one great cause of the encrease in the population, while at the same time it diminished the quantity of pasture-lands and forests. In the same way we find that a much greater extent of territory is requisite to support the wild Indian, who depends upon the chace for his food, than the cultivator of the land who makes up for other deficiencies by the use of grain and vegetables. Civilization, which never is found where the population is far below the extent of country, must have stopt at an early period but for this vital change in the habits of the Anglo-Saxons.

It would not appear that many kinds of fish were in use as an article of diet until the beginning of the eighth century, when bishop Wilfrid rescued the people of Sussex from famine by teaching them the art of fishery upon a more extended scale than they had hitherto employed. Before that time eels had been the principal sustenance that they derived from the waters, and these long continued, like pork, to be a very general article of consumption. Under the bishop's instruction they now added to their catalogue of eatables, herrings, salmons, porpoises, sturgeons, oysters, crabs, muscles, cockles, winkles, haddocks, plaice, flounders, lobsters, eel-pouts, skate, and lampreys. The superior skill of Wilfred in gastronomy is abundantly accounted for by the fact of his having at one time travelled over the continent to Rome.

Wheat, as being more expensive than barley, was confined in a great measure to the rich, while the latter was the general food of the poorer classes. The corn was threshed with flails, not unlike our own in the present day. For the subsequent grinding of it they at first used handmills of a very simple mechanism, but after a time, as we learn from many extant deeds of conveyance, they employed both water-mills and wind-mills. The bread made of the flour thus prepared was frequently eaten hot, and in that state seems to have been a popular article of food.

Honey and milk were both in high request, more particularly the former. We read too that *lac acidum*,—which can hardly be interpreted otherwise than as meaning whey,—was served up in a certain monastery from Hokeday to Michaelmas, and *lac dulce* from Michaelmas to Martinmas. The use of whey was in all

probability general, though we do not meet with any other records of it, the diet being natural and requiring little art in the preparation. To this part of the Anglo-Saxon fare we may add butter, cheese, and eggs.

Pot-herbs, beans, onions, and lentils, would seem to have been their most important vegetables, the list indeed of which was very limited. To make amends, the orchard was cultivated with much care, and produced figs, nuts, grapes, almonds, pears, and apples.

The cookery of the Saxons comprehended the three processes of boiling, broiling, and baking; yet in other respects it possessed few of those complications and niceties, which characterized the kitchen of the Normans. Roasting does not appear to have been used at an early period,—even a goose was boiled. Indeed there is some reason for suspecting that they still retained a slight hankering after the raw flesh of the uncivilized northmen, for unless this had been the case, it would be difficult to understand why the clergy should deem it necessary to make regulations against the eating of half-dressed food. If any one ate it knowingly, he was condemned to a fast of four days; and if ignorantly, to one of three days.

In the cloisters the office of a cook was, as a natural result of the other monastic rules, assigned to men, and from the mention made of it in the laws, was evidently considered of importance. Amongst the laity the cook was for the most part, but not always a female.

If the food of the Anglo-Saxons was coarse, and the preparation of it simple, this certainly did not arise from any cynical contempt for the enjoyments of the table. Four meals a day show that they held the pleasures of eating in at least sufficient regard; and they drank the various liquors, which the knowledge of the day supplied, in equal proportion. Their favourite drinks were ale, and mead, wine being used occasionally as a peculiar luxury by the richer sort. The wine was sometimes taken warm; so too was the ale. The latter was of three kinds;—Welsh ale; Lithes, or mild ale; and clear ale. Pigment also was much in use with these staunch wassailers. This was a sweet and fragrant composition, made of wine, honey, and various kinds of spices. Morat, another popular drink, was compounded of mulberry-juice

and honey. The cup of course went frequently round during the meal, but it was when dinner was over and the tables removed that the real carouse began, which was then protracted until the evening.

Of the customs observed at table we may form some idea from the drawings that accompany various Anglo-Saxon manuscripts. The women mingled freely with the men at their meals without any apparent rule of order, or, if any were observed, it probably arose from considerations of wealth or other distinction, precisely as it does in our own days. In one of the pictures above alluded to, the male and female guests are placed alternately like white and black squares on a chess board. The tables were either oval or oblong, and covered with a cloth that hung low down. The meat was brought from the kitchen in dishes by servants, who presented it upon a spit to each guest that he might help himself, which he did without the help of a fork, an utensil, unknown, or unused, at those darker periods. The men sate uncovered, the women in their usual head-dresses.

Rude as these repasts may seem, they were rendered social by the mixture of all those amusements to which the skill of the age supplied. It was while the ale-cup passed round, that the minstrels sang, the harpers played, the posture-masters hopped, tumbled, and performed the other antics of their trade, the fools and jesters enlivened the guests with their buffoonery, and the jugglers, or gleemen, enacted their feats of wonder. The nature of these last may be inferred from the drawings which the indefatigable Strutt has given us out of ancient manuscripts. In one we see the glee-man of Saxon times performing some of the identical wonders that when first exhibited in London by an Indian juggler so much astonished the world, until being taken up by native itinerants they at once lost their miraculous character; the multitude of professors showed that the supposed difficulty was a very simple matter. The principal feat here alluded to is one now sufficiently common; it consists in throwing up three balls and as many knives alternately into the air, and catching them one by one as they fall, but returning each in rotation, so that all, except the one just caught, shall be in the air at the same time either ascending or descending. The appearance produced by the gilt balls is, as every one knows, that of a dropping golden foun-

tain, the exceeding rapidity of their play causing their motion to seem continuous. This feat was usually accompanied by an instrument, something like the modern violin, not, as Sharon Turner supposes, to add to the apparent difficulty of the performance, an end which it certainly would not have accomplished, but for the very natural object of heightening the spectator's pleasure by the charms of music in harmony with the acted pantomine.

It seems highly probable, though it may admit of question, that dancing animals of various kinds were also introduced on these occasions. Certain it is that the gleemen taught bears and other animals the same tricks that we see them performing in the present day, and made them a part of their common exhibitions. Their own dancing very possibly did not go much beyond that of their quadruped pupils, for the Anglo-Saxon word expressive of dancing was TUMBIAN, that is *to tumble,* a significant hint as to the nature of the amusement. But we shall, presently, have to speak more at large on the subject of the Anglo-Saxon sports.

It is possible, and even probable, that many changes took place in the customs here described, long before the Normans introduced their more refined mode of living. Manners of any kind are seldom stationary for long together, although in a rude state such changes are much slower than in the midst of civilization, when habits sit more lightly upon men, and the appetite for novelty is unceasing; still we have no authority for them in the present instance, and little good would be attained by supplying the want of facts by conjectures however reasonable.

To this part of our subject it only remains to add that the early Anglo-Saxons had places for the sale of liquors, very closely resembling the modern ale-house. Such establishments were known by the name of *Ceapealethelmum,* that is, places where ale was sold.

We have already remarked upon the great difficulty there is in fixing the precise time, to which any peculiar custom should be limited. If the commencement of each is uncertain, so too is the period of termination, if indeed any custom can be supposed to have been broken off all at once, and not been rather superseded by slow, and no longer distinguishable gradations. This is yet

more particularly the case in regard to dress, which at all times and in all countries has been subject to unceasing changes.

That the Saxons were very fond of ornaments and fine apparel is evident. In this respect the men went beyond the women, though such a failing was scarcely to be expected from the general hardihood of their character. Men of the superior order wore costly bracelets on their arms, and rings of no less value upon the fourth finger of the right hand, which hence obtained the name of *gold finger*.

Silk, as being a rare and expensive material, was used only by the great and wealthy, and was sometimes mixed with the hair of goats, at others with the wool of sheep. Linen was not uncommon, for we read in the history of the Lombards that the dress of the Anglo-Saxons consisted chiefly of that fabric, ornamented with broad borders, and embroidered with many colours. One is tempted, however, by many considerations to receive this dictum with some allowance, and to believe that woollen raiment was more common with the multitude, nor can there be any doubt that leather, and skins more or less imperfectly dressed, for a long time constituted the outer garb of the bondsman.

The fashion of the dress seems to have admitted of much variety in the same age, and amongst the same classes. Thus some pictures represent the Saxon soldier with his head covered, while others show us workmen and nobles in the open air without either hat or cap. Sometimes they wore tight stockings that reached above the knee; at others their legs appear to have been covered half way up with a sort of roller or bandage wound about them. But this article of dress was frequently dispensed with even by the higher classes. The shoes, which, as now, were made of leather, came up close round the ancle, being fastened with thongs of the same material. Saint Cuthbert, we are told, would keep them on for months together; but there is no reason for supposing that this neglect of decent cleanliness was carried to the like extent by the laity in general.

One of the most curious portraitures of the Anglo-Saxon costume is to be found in the celebrated Bayeux tapestry. In that we see both high and low wearing bonnets on their heads even

in the presence of the king, who is seated, sceptre in hand, upon his throne. Most of the figures there are represented with closely-fitting vests, girded round them with a belt, and the sleeves reaching to the wrists. Below this they have shirts like kilts, that do not quite touch the knee. Harold again, who is on horseback with his falcon, has a different costume. He wears breeches, though like the linen shirts they do not descend to the knee, while his cloak is seen flowing behind and buttoned on the right shoulder. His knights also are represented with cloaks and breeches, the latter however differing from those worn by himself, inasmuch as they entirely cover the knee. When about to embark, Harold appears in another costume. He then wears a sort of jacket with small flaps; but when he takes the oath to William, he is indued in a cloak, or rather robe, that flows almost down to his heels, and is buttoned on the breast.

We have another very complete specimen of Saxon costume in the manuscript of the Saxon gospels, where the four Evangelists are pourtrayed in colours so as to clear up much that might otherwise have seemed uncertain. It exhibits in a striking light the great fondness of the Germanic race for a variety of colours, with little or no attention to their general harmony and their fitness for blending with each other. Matthew is clothed in a purple vest, a sort of under-gown reaching to the wrists where it is braided with yellow; a similar border goes round the nook and the bottom of the garment. His upper robe, which extends much below the under one, is green with red stripes. He has neither shoes nor sandals, but there is a lacing round the ancles as if intended for the latter.

The under-dress of Luke is of a doubtful lilac, with stripes of light green, over which is a purple robe striped with red. The arm is of the same colour as the vest, and comes through the robe, while a border circles the neck and wrists.

The robe of Mark is purple with blue stripes, and buttoned at the neck, below which it opens, showing an under garment of pale blue striped with red.

The upper robe worn by John is likewise purple with blue stripes; it is extremely loose, and opening at the breast, discovers a pea-green under-garment with red stripes. In all this,

however, the variety regards the colour, and not the fashion of the garments. So deeply was the passion for gaudy tints impressed on every class of the Anglo-Saxons that even the ecclesiastics shared in it, and many stringent regulations were passed by Councils and heads of the Church to check it among the latter, who, when thus of necessity confined themselves to a sober garb, began to fulminate their anathemas against similar delinquencies amongst the people. Incessant were their exhortations to men and women of all ranks that they should turn from the enormity of diversified colours, and adopt a more simple fashion. Boniface, the Anglo-Saxon missionary, went so far as to declare that the wearing of garments with broad studs announced the coming of Anti-Christ.

The hair of the men was generally, though not always, parted from the crown to the forehead and combed down the sides of the head in waving ringlets. Their whiskers were continued on either cheek till they met and merged into the beard, which divided at the chin, and ended in two forked points. In the time, however, of the second Harold, the beard was completely shaven off, although the mustachios were allowed to attain their full length. Of this we have an example in the Bayeux tapestry, where the Saxon prince and his companions are all shown with long hair upon the upper lip. In the reign of king Edward the beard again came into fashion, yet so much diversity prevailed in this respect, that in the pictures of the evangelists in the Cotton manuscript Luke and Matthew have both beards and mustashios, while Mark and John are without either. This seems the more singular as the clergy were strictly forbidden to wear beards, though such an authority, one would have thought, must have justified the custom. With the young men too it was a general though not an invariable habit to shave the chin, and this was also the case, but more rarely, with those in a state of servitude.

The dress of the Saxon female is more difficult to be understood than that of the men, from our ignorance of the precise signification of many of the terms that have come down to us in description of it. Yet we do know that a great change took place in the fashion of their garments upon their conversion to Christianity. The ancient fathers of the Church were at all times ready to denounce, both in councils and in the pulpit, the Pagan

form of dress; and perhaps not without reason; so long as any Pagan customs survived, no matter of what kind, there was always more or less danger of the people relapsing into their old heathenism.

Amidst these doubts there are still many points that may be looked upon as certain. Thus it is unquestionable that the ladies wore head bands, necklaces, and bracelets, as well as rings. In one instance the necklace is described as being of gold and vermiculated; in another we read of a neck-cross; and in a third we are told of "a golden fly beautifully enamelled with gems;" in fact, just such a species of ornament as we might expect to meet with in the present day.

Much art too would seem to have been used in dressing the hair. In the case of a wife, described by Aldhelm, we are told that her hair was twisted, and curled with irons, which we may suppose to have been somewhat analogous to those now in use for a similar purpose. Many instances are to be found of this twisting of the locks, and indeed the wearing of long hair in ringlets appears to have been the distinguishing mark of a free woman. They also painted their cheeks with a sort of rouge prepared from antimony.

Mantles, kirtles, and tunics of various colours occur in the inventory of the Saxon lady's wardrobe, with girdles, cuffs, and ribands. It would also seem that they were usually apparelled in long loose robes descending to the ground, with extremely full sleeves. On the head they wore a hood, or perhaps it should rather be called a veil, which fell down in front, closely enveloping the neck and breast. Of course this attire allowed no display of fine waists, the whole figure presenting very nearly the same outline, much as we see it when shrouded in the Roman toga.

In visiting the interior of the Anglo-Saxon houses the reader can not fail to be struck with the quantity of luxuries, rude indeed, but still luxuries, to be found in them, and which could scarcely have been invented by a people who were struggling in the darkness of a semi-barbarous state. This apparent miracle, however, soon ceases to be such when we look a little more closely into the subject. Rome now possessed the religious, as she had formerly wielded the military, empire of Europe, and

her despotism with all its faults was the sole bond of union b tween many nations, and the only means of spreading as well of preserving civilization. Her lamp might, or might not, ming some degree of smoke with the light it sent forth on all sides the flame may not have been quite pure; but still without it th world must have long remained in utter darkness. Had Rom been less despotic in her faith, she would unquestionably hav been far less useful; her religion in fact was a civilized con queror, who over-runs barbarous nations, and gives them exchange for savage freedom the blessings of peace and cultiv tion. With the polemical part of the question we do not preten to meddle, nor would it at all tend to illustrate the subject w have in hand.

The hierarchies, which soon arose in every state, kept up constant intercourse between themselves, and with Rome als as the common centre of their belief. Out of this habit the grew in most cases a spirit of intimacy and friendship, whic manifested itself by the interchange of presents in the shape books, clothes, articles of furniture, and even the aromatic pro ductions of the East. Hence what was familiar in one countr soon ceased to be strange in any other. Of this kindly feelin we have innumerable examples in the letters of our Boniface, well as in those of Pope Gregory, while the constant visits tha were paid to Rome both by the laity and clergy tended not little to diffuse the useful arts and sciences inherited by the Eter nal City from the classic times. Indeed one is surprized at th value of the presents which were sent by the Anglo Saxons t their friends in Rome and to those authorities there whom it wa their interest to propitiate. How they came to possess the pre cious metals in abundance must for ever be a subject of astonish ment, but the gifts carried thither by the father of Alfred th Great may be quoted in illustration of the fact. Anastasius i his lives of the pontiffs informs us that the offerings in questio were, a crown of the purest gold weighing five pounds; two basons of the same metal but of uncertain weight, a sword boun with unalloyed gold; two small images also of gold; and four dishes of silver gilt. In addition to these substantial gifts he distributed coins of all sorts amongst the people, to say nothing of sundry silk dresses, gold clasps, and hangings. Even before

this time we read of gold and silver vessels being sent to the same place as gifts, and amongst them a silver table weighing several pounds, which was intended for the oratory in the pontifical palace at Frescati.

Glass too, though by no means common till the period of the Norman Conquest, was still not unknown to the Anglo-Saxons. Bede mentions lamps and other vessels made of that material, but they would seem to have been more rare than gold or silver.

While the Anglo-Saxons bestowed such largesses upon others abroad, it could hardly be supposed that they would neglect themselves at home; accordingly we hear of gold and silver roods, crosses, and crucifixes, a silver graphium or pen used by those who could write, and a crown for the monarch made of gold and set with divers jewels. At their festivals there was the same abundance of the precious metals exhibited in the shape of golden and silver goblets, cups with fringed edges, and chalices variegated with gold.

The churches, as will be easily imagined, were the first buildings that profited by this increase of useful knowledge. By degrees the abodes of the wealthier classes began to show signs of the same beneficial influence. The nakedness of the walls was clothed in hangings, not unfrequently of silk, sometimes plain, but at others embellished with various devices. Figures of golden birds, and wrought pictures of the siege of Troy, would appear to have been favourite subjects of ornament. In one instance we are told of a lady who had the noble deeds of her husband woven into the tapestry upon the walls of her chamber, that the memory of them might be preserved to after times. Such superior adornments, however, requiring much skill and labour, must have been too expensive for common use, since we find a king, when presenting a piece of arras to a monastery, enjoining that it should be suspended only on high days and festivals. In one case a monarch stipulates that a gift of this kind shall never be used except at his anniversary.

Curtains were frequently dyed purple, and always received some bright hue, for the same passion for bright and various colours, that prevailed in regard to dress, obtained also in respect to such articles of furniture. It has even been doubted by some

whether the Anglo-Saxons did not have carpets, or at least something that approached to foot-cloths; but when we consider at how late a period it was the custom of the rich and noble to strew their chambers with rushes, it is hardly possible to entertain such a belief. Had the usage ever prevailed, it was not likely to have been lost in a more refined age, and succeeded by so rude a substitute.

It is beyond dispute that they had covered seats and benches, with the feet and heads of animals at their extremities. They had also arrived at the luxury of pedalia, or footstools not less ornamented; in particular we are told by Ingulphus of two large pedalia that had lions interwoven, and of two smaller ones that were sprinkled with embossed flowers.

Great expense was gone to in the article of tables, which were sometimes plated with silver, intermingled with various gems. At other times we read of tables made of gold and silver, if indeed it is allowable to infer a general practice from a single instance.

The candlesticks of the wealthy were often no less expensive, being composed of the precious metals. Those designed for common use were more frequently perhaps made of bone. Silver mirrors also were almost generally to be found in the better houses, and formed a part of the Saxon lady's toilette. Small hand-bells supplied the place of the more artificial modern contrivance.

The beds seem to have been very complete for that rude age. They had curtains and bed-clothes, the fur of animals being used for coverings, and fly-nets which were sometimes gilded, and pillows stuffed with straw. From a drawing yet extant it would appear that both the head and bottom of the bed were boarded.

But with all this variety of costly utensils, which would be incredible but that it is confirmed by wills and other documents of equal authority, the arts of the carpenter and joiner were in the lowest state. The people who could emboss cups and candlesticks, and gem bracelets, were fain to content themselves with buildings full of crevices that admitted the wind in all directions. Even Alfred in his royal palaces could find no better method of screening his lights from the blast without than by

placing them in lanterns. Every thing indicates that the Anglo-Saxons had much more of the superfluous than of the really useful, in total opposition to what according to all rational surmize would be the natural course of things. But a very important inference is deducible from this fact—the slavish state of the social mass, and the unbounded power of the churchmen and nobles, whose artificial wants got the advance of those common arts which ministered to the general necessities; being of hardy and enduring habits they could dispense with comfort, but not with show and luxury. Even the gums and odoriferous productions of the East were well known to the Anglo-Saxons, and pepper, frankincense, cinnamon, storax, and a spicy herb called costus, the produce of Persia and Arabia, are enumerated amongst the interchange of presents. Hot baths were in common use, and the partial abstinence from them, except on festivals, was reckoned amongst the catalogue of mortifications, which the church declared to be useful both for mind and body.

Pediluvium or 'foot-washing,' was also a frequent custom, especially after travelling. Indeed it was enjoined by the canons not only to supply the necessities of the poor, but to lave their feet also, an injunction that no doubt proceeded from the example of our Saviour, when he washed the feet of the apostles. Independently of this general command, the duty of laving the feet of the poor was often more especially imposed upon the rich by way of penance, and we find mention of a rough woollen cloth used in drying them. From this necessity for constant washing a conclusion has been drawn somewhat hastily that, though shoes and stockings were both worn at home, they were yet little used in travelling.

The cold bath was held by the Anglo-Saxons in little estimation, though if there had not been direct and undeniable testimony to this effect one would rather have inclined to believe that its evident tendency to brace the nerves and general constitution would have recommended its frequent use to a race of warriors. When mentioned, however, it is as a penitentiary infliction, the price of absolution for offences that were of a lighter nature.

Something has already been said of the Anglo-Saxon sports and amusements, when speaking of their meals, and particularly

of their habits at the dinner-table. It is now time to resume the subject.

Even though we had no specific assurance of the fact, it would be a natural and very probable inference, from the general customs of the Saxons, that if they had any dances at all they would not fail to have military dances. But the thing itself is sufficiently manifested by the drawings in a Latin manuscript of Prudentius with Anglo-Saxon notes appended. Two men in war-like costume, and each with a sword and buckler, are engaged in a mock combat, which like the stage-fights of our own days is evidently carried on to music, for a man, who with his female companion dances about them, is at the same time blowing a horn to regulate the measure.

Bear-baiting was practiced at an early period, and would seem to have been then, as it was for some centuries afterwards, a very popular amusement. Although somewhat in advance of the subject before us, we may be allowed to remark incidentally that from an entry in Domesday Book it appears that the city of Norwich amongst other annual payments was bound to furnish one bear, and six dogs for baiting him.

It is difficult to fix with precision the functions of the gleeman, or, as it was rendered in Latin, joculator. At times we find him differing very little from the fool or jester. Whatever may have been his office, the heads of the Church held it in such slight respect that their Councils strictly forbad the monks to admit the practicers of these inhibited arts within their gates; poets, harpers, musicians, and buffoons being all included in the same sweeping anathema. The ecclesiastic, moreover, is on no account to become an eala-scop or ale-poet, nor is he to enact the gleeman. Yet, with all this, things would seem to have run precisely the same course with the Saxons as with us in the present day; the singer and his art were at once despised and followed, abused and honoured, rejected and rewarded. We read in Domesday-Book of a king's joculator being possessed of three villas in Gloucestershire.—

"Naturam expellas furcâ tamen usque recurrit."

Gambling in one shape or another has ever been found in all

stages of society, and the Anglo-Saxons formed no exception to a rule so general. They had their games of hazard played with dice, for we find a canon of Edgar strictly prohibiting such amusements to the ecclesiastics. They had also a game called TESSERARUM or SCACCARARUM, the nature of which we have no means of ascertaining; some have imagined that it resembled chess; this however is a conjecture almost decisively refuted by the appellation of the game, which seems to intimate that it was played with dice, and differed from chess by being an union of chance with skill, just as we see it in the more modern game of backgammon.

The nobler sport of the chase, which like dicing may be considered as a recreation common to all people, was also a favourite amusement with the Anglo-Saxons. It afforded them all the excitement, and some of the danger, of war, and was eminently calculated to keep alive that spirit of daring which in their estimation was the highest, as then indeed the most necessary of human virtues, since without it there was no security for life or land for a single day. One mode of hunting was for several parties to beset the forest in different directions. The deer being thus roused, the king, if he were present, or any other noble leader of the hunt, would select from them the one that appeared fittest for the purposes of the chase, and the sport would then begin. But it would seem that the modern rules of hunting were not always, or even often, acknowledged, the sportsman making no scruple to outrun his hounds, and bring the animal to bay himself.

A second mode was often practiced yet more opposed to modern nations, which seek to increase the pleasure of the sport by allowing ample law to the persecuted animal. In this case the hunter would spread his nets across the deer-paths in the forest, and with the assistance of his hounds drive the prey into the toils, when they were easily despatched. In whichever way followed, the usual objects of the chase were harts, rein-deer, boars, goats, and somewhat less frequently hares. Sometimes the boar was more equally dealt with, and faced by a single enemy, who speared him, or killed him with a short sword.

The cruel sport of hawking was in high favour with the Saxons, —cruel, if for no other reason, for the large number of domestic fowls that were sacrificed to the education of the young falcon,

who was thus taught to strike his prey. For this amusement th great extent of woodlands, harbouring as they did birds of a sorts in abundance, afforded an inexhaustible supply. Eve Edward the Confessor, with all his pretensions to superior re gion and humanity, was in this respect no whit advanced befo his age. It was immediately after the zealous performance of h morning devotions that the pious king would set out for the cha or for the pastime of hawking, the sobs of the deer or the scre of the poor fluttering birds never seeming to make him doubt th humanity of his amusements.

The fowler had various modes of securing his prey, using, as h found it most convenient, gins, traps, or bird-lime, his end n being sport but profit. It appears too that he possessed the a of enticing and snaring birds by whistling in imitation of the peculiar notes.

It is singular enough that while the polished nations of th East—polished at least with regard to those days,—treated the women as no better than slaves and instruments of sensual grati fication, the barbarians of the western world should have raise them in all respects to an equality with themselves, and in som endowed them with peculiar privileges. Many of these, however have again been considerably modified by the refinements of a later period, so that but for the contrary example afforded us by the rude Indian, one might be tempted to believe that a barbarou state of society was most favourable to female predominance.

Amongst the Anglo-Saxons the women were allowed to be pre sent both at the witena-gemot and the shire-gemot; they coul sue or be sued in courts of justice, and could inherit, possess, and dispose of property without controul from any one. Even the husband had no part or portion in what was specifically bequeath ed to the wife; she could do with it as she pleased, either by sel ling or devising it. Sometimes lands were granted to men and their wives conjointly, and many instances occur of queens being joined in charters with the Anglo-Saxon kings.

Over and above those privileges which they enjoyed in common with the other sex, their lives and liberties were protected by ex press laws made for the purpose, and which by their scope and

stringency afforded them the security they were otherwise unable to compel for themselves, so that they really seem to have united in their own persons the advantages of strength and the immunities of weakness.

With such lofty notions of the female sex in general, it startles us not a little to find that a woman, whether maiden or widow, might be bought and sold in the way of marriage, always supposing that no fraud was practiced in the matter, in which case she was to be taken home again, and the man's money,—the morgengift, that is, or dowry,—was to be returned to him. On the other hand, if the wife brought forth live children and survived her husband, she was entitled to half her property, nay, if she chose to live with her children, the same advantage was allowed her.

The ceremonies that precede wedlock were formal, and even formidable to the bridegroom, who in many respect was not much better off than the unlucky oriental, that marries one of the sultan's numerous daughters, or one of the rejected slips of the imperial harem. First he had to obtain the consent of the lady and her friends. The next step was for him to arrange the *foster-lean* —the money which was to be devoted for the support of the expected children,—which being settled to the satisfaction of all parties, he was then declare how much he meant to give the lady for consenting to be his, as well as what he would bequeath her in case of his prior decease. The first of these was the so called *Morgengift*; it consisted of land or money, and seems in many respects to have borne a close resemblence to the modern jointure, although of a more free and unfettered nature; the forms attending it being extremely similar. Thus, though the morgengift was bargained for before marriage, it was not actually vested in the bride till afterwards, but, for greater security, the land, which it was meant to convey, was given in trust for the person granting it until the solemnization of the proposed marriage, when it was applied to the uses that had been previously agreed upon. Unlike the modern jointure, however, as arranged in most cases, it was generally granted in full right to the lady, who could alienate it at her own will and pleasure. It is true it had at one time been provided that in the event of there being no children the morgengift was to be returned, yet this, which bore hard upon the female without any sufficient cause, was modified at a later period, when

the effects of the law seem by experience to have become better understood.

The watchful jealousy, with which the Anglo-Saxons regarded and fenced in the independence of their women, showed itself yet more distinctly in their making the bridegroom's friends become security for the full performance of all his ante-nuptial promises. Nothing was trusted to his honour, or to the feelings which he might be reasonably supposed to entertain towards the object of his choice. Whatever might be the cause, the object of the Anglo-Saxons was to place the female part of the society in the highest state of independence, and this end seems on most occasions to have been perfectly attained. Widows came in for an equal share of this regard, their safety and interests being protected by express regulations. He, who invaded their tranquillity, was punished by fines adapted to the rank and station of the party injured, the mulct varying from fifty shillings to twenty, twelve, and six. Greater offences against their persons subjected the offender to a double fine. But at the same time, while much consideration was shown to the widow, something also was expected of her in return. She was not allowed to marry within a year after her husband's death, and if she violated this salutary regulation she was condemned to forfeit her morgengift in punishment. After that time of limit had expired, she might marry whom she pleased.

It may perhaps be considered as a draw-back to all this liberality of the Saxons in their matrimonial engagements, and as detracting somewhat from their high respect for women, that they literally spoke of marriage as a matter of buying and selling. The old law expressly says that if a man *buys* a maiden and has been deceived, she shall be sent home, and his money returned to him, a summary act of justice no doubt in many cases, but liable to much abuse, and evincing no very romantic delicacy of feeling. Then again another law tells us that "if a freeman cohabit with the wife of a freeman, he must pay her were"—her estimated value—"and obtain another woman with his own money and lead her to the other." For adultery with the wife of a twelve-hundred man, the mulct was one hundred and twenty shillings; with the wife of a six hundred man, one hundred shillings; with a ceorl's wife, only forty shillings. Of these terms we shall speak

hereafter. If any one forced an immature maiden, he was punished by corporal mutilation, and the like severity of justice awaited the slave who committed rape upon a female in his own state of servitude. These regulations, it must be allowed, serve to show that the Anglo-Saxons very much regarded women in the light of property to be paid for, if damaged, like any other article of traffic; but then they likewise prove how great was the value set upon female chastity in those days. That even the servile came in for a share of such regard, arose probably from the familiarity subsisting between them and their immediate superiors. The companion of a noble lady, whether maid or wife, must needs have borne a character that fitted her for such a situation.

If we now add that marriage was forbidden within certain degrees of consanguinity, we have said all that is required upon this part of *our subject.*

In the social state of the Anglo-Saxons there existed various classes subordinate to the cyning and his family. The subject might derive estimation from birth, the glory of his ancestors being reflected upon himself; he might be dignified by the holding of much property; he might be a free-man, a freedman, or belong to one of the servile classes.

Birth conferred personal distinction, but neither rank, nor power, nor political privilege, nor was any title, hereditary or otherwise, attached to it. The *ethelboren,* or nobly-born, were however marked out, like the Fabii and Cornelii of ancient Rome, by that name of the family which had first become famous, the syllable *ing* being added to the name of the illustrious ancestor. Thus the posterity of the Scylde were called Scyldinge; and the descendants of Uffa, Uffingas. It would appear too that these distinctions, however barren of any real advantage, too often excited pride in the possessor, as no doubt they excited envy in those who could not boast of such an heritage; for in the canons of king Edgar it is particularly enjoined upon this fortunate class, "that no forthboren priest should despise one less born, because, if men think rightly, all men are of one origin,"—an undeniable dictum, but so also do gold and lead derive their origin from the same mother, Earth, yet gold is not

the less gold, and lead remains lead. The "vix ea nostra voco" is all very well in the mouth of poets and philosophers, but it is denied by the common feelings of mankind in every age and every country.

In saying that these ethelboren had no privileges, we should be understood with one exception; they had a privilege, and of a very singular nature—the right of vicarious penance. In the laws of King Edgar, who seems to have been a great meddler in ecclesiastical matters, it is enacted that "a great man, and one rich in friends, may much alleviate his penance by their help. First he must make a frank confession of his sins to the priest, promising abstinence, and beginning his penance with many groans. Then let him lay aside his arms and vain attire and take a staff in his hand, and go constantly bare-footed, and put on woollen garments, and not enter a bed, but lie in a yard, and do this for seven years. Having for three days thus prepared himself, let him at first take to his aid twelve men, and let them fast three days on bread, green herbs, and water; and to complete the penance let him procure, howsoever he is able, seven times one hundred and twenty men, who will each fast for him three days. Then they will have fasted as many days as are in seven years." Had this singular custom been vouched to us only by some historian, it might well have been doubted, for an instance of vicarious penance carried to such an extent is no where else to be found—the penance of seven years got over in a week!—but we find it in the still extant law, and it is thus placed beyond dispute or question. The only sensible part of King Edgar's canon is that which enjoins charity towards the poor. The kneeling, and groaning, and weeping, and making frequent signs of the cross, and passing night as well as day within a church, which are also commanded, will hardly go for much in the present day, or tend to raise the royal character in modern estimation.

Property in land also conferred nobility, though very distinct in its nature from that of birth, for it brought with it rank and immunities, denied to the latter. The object of this wise regulation was to stimulate all men to industry, since by obtaining land they might likewise acquire dignity and command in the state. This purpose was plainly enough avouched by the law

when it declared that a servile thrael might by his own exertions become a thane, and that a ceorl might raise himself to the dignity of an eorl if he exerted himself to obtain the necessary qualifications. In the reign of Ethelstan we find the same doctrine yet more explicitly and minutely stated. The records of that period tell us that if a ceorl had the full proprietorship of five hides of land, a church, a kitchen, a bell-house, a burghate seat, and a fitting office in the king's hall, he should thenceforth become a thane by right. So also a massere, or merchant, who had three times crossed the sea in his own craft, was advanced to the same rank. Thus too a thane might by his own exertions raise himself to the dignity of an eorl. So great indeed was the importance attached to the possession of land, that even a noble could not sit in the witena-gemot who had not the full quantity prescribed by law. A curious instance of this is given in the Historia Eliensis, which may be briefly rendered thus, omitting only some unnecessary details. Witnicht, an abbot of Ely, had a brother, by name Gudmund, who sought in marriage the daughter of a certain great man; but the lady refused him, because, not having forty hides of land, he could not be numbered among the proceres. Upon this, the wooer sought the abbot, and entreated that out of brotherly love he would bestow on him a portion of the abbey-lands sufficient to qualify him to sit in the witenagemot. A greater offence could hardly have been committed against conventual rule, or one more likely to be resented by the monks, than such a spoliation of the convent property; but the abbot, led away by affection for his brother, and hoping that the act might remain unnoticed, consented to Gudmund's request, and endowed him with certain lands belonging to the monastery, though only by way of loan, and to be returned at a fitting season. The stratagem answered so far that the lady being deceived by this show of property consented to marry Gudmund. The monks however were more keensighted, and, though cheated for a while, eventually discovered what had been done, and in consequence loaded the abbot with unceasing reproaches. Hereupon, either because he was conscience-stricken, or that he feared ecclesiastical pains and penalties for his offence, he retired to Acholt, one of the places, of which he had alienated a portion, and there died. Still Gudmund would by no means relinquish the lands thus dearly acquired, but at length yielded to a compact

with his brother's successor in the abbacy, by which it was settled that he should retain them for his life. The event deceived the expectation of both parties. Soon after the conclusion of this amicable treaty, which would in time have restored their lands to the monks, William came over with his Normans, and having conquered the whole country, gave the disputed domain to one of his companions. Henceforth it was irrevocably lost to the Church, for, where property was concerned, the fierce Normans paid as little regard to the rights of Saxon monks as they did to the rights of the Saxon laity.

The same principle of distinction from the possession of property is also mentioned in the yet extant Anglo-Saxon laws, as we learn from the Historia Ramesiensis. This matter has been so clearly as well as concisely stated by Sharon Turner, that we cannot do better than borrow his luminous detail. "Thus," he says, "we read of twyhyndum, of syxhyndum, and of twelfhyndum men, a twyhynde man level in his *were* with a ceorl, and a twelfhynde with a thegn; and yet Canute calls both these classes his thegns. But, though property might confer distinction, yet it was the possession of landed property which raised a man to those titles which might be called ennobling. Hence it is mentioned that though a ceorl should attain to a helmet, mail, and gold-hilted sword, yet if he had no land he must still remain a ceorl." It is surprizing how much of this old Anglo-Saxon feeling remains impressed upon the body of our existing law in defiance of the changes effected in the constitution by the Norman conquest. Even the wonderful spread of commerce, and the consequent rise into affluence and power of a class that was then of little importance, have not been able to eradicate it.

The nobility conferred by the holding of certain offices may be considered as appertaining to the ealderman, the earl, the heretoch, and the thegn, provided he was the king's thegn. The gerefa and the scir-reve would also seem to have derived rank from their place in the state, while a yet inferior consequence attached itself to the ealder of a hundred, and to other subordinate situations.

Official dignities were conferred by the king, and might be taken away by him for misconduct or incompetency. Thus we

find Alfred rebuking his great men, for not fulfilling the duties of the stations in which he had placed them, and threatening to deprive them of office if they did not study wisdom, and better qualify themselves to discharge their several functions. His remonstrances on this head show in a strong light the deplorable state of sloth and ignorance to which the highest had sunk, and leave us little cause to wonder at their being so constantly defeated by the Danes. They had lost the virtues of civilization without gaining the hardy qualities of barbarism.

It now remains to notice the other three classes of which Anglo-Saxon society was composed,—the free, the freed, and the servile.

The freeman of those early days was far from being in that state of liberty, which the word would naturally infer if taken in its present acceptation. The most that could be said for his condition was its not being actual and arbitrary bondage:—it was not positively servile; nor was he attached to the land as the serfs were. He often had a master, but he was not irrevocably bound to him, and might quit him at his option for another, so that his servitude had no other compulsion than what proceeded from his own necessities. Still his liberty, such as it was, had a very precarious tenure. If he worked on Sunday without his lord's orders, he was condemned to forfeit his freedom and sink into a slave, or else, as a milder punishment, to pay a fine of sixty shillings, an enormous sum in those days. There were other occasions also when he might be punished by the loss of freedom. He was then called a *wite theow*, and became subject to corporal punishment for the offence committed in a state of freedom, and if he stole while thus degraded, he was hanged.

We have already observed that the freeman did not always have a master; yet even then his condition was liable to many draw-backs, from which the serf in his chains was exempt. While the latter had a lord to answer for his real or supposed offences, and to pay any fines he might incur, the freeman having no such responsible protector was obliged to find constant securities for his appearance. Nor was this the worst. As he was considered a much more important character than the mere serf, his fines when incurred were proportionably greater. On the other hand

it can not be denied that there were some privileges annexed to his condition that served to qualify these evils and raise it above the lowest grade. If he broke an appointed fast, which the bigotry of the Anglo-Saxon faith held to be a grievous crime, his punishment was a fine, and nothing more; whereas the slave, who had so offended, was mercilessly whipt. The king, moreover, was the freeman's lord and patron, and, if taken with stolen goods upon him, it was for the king to award his punishment, who might put him to death, or sell him over the sea, but who had also the power of dealing with him more mildly and receiving his Wære. Then again, whoever sent a freeman into bonds, had to atone for the offence by a mulct of twenty shillings.

Lastly we come to the servile class, which comprehended by far the greater part of the population. These unfortunate beings, who were termed theow, thrael, esne, and men,—a strange misapplication of the word—were bought and sold with land, like sheep and oxen, or any other property that happened to be upon it; in many instances they were bequeathed, or given away for presents. Even the heads of the Church did not scruple to deal in this unchristian traffic, and without, as it would seem, incurring any censure from the general opinion, though this was loud enough against them when they practised minor vices. Fathers too, if poor, might sell their sons to slavery for seven years, provided the latter were willing, a saving clause, that must have availed little, since the parent who was brutal enough to relieve his poverty by the sale of his own flesh and blood, could never be at a loss for means to extort a consent from the fears or the duty of a child.

To make this system of slavery yet more atrocious, the family and descendants of the serfs partook the same lot from generation to generation. The heritage of slavery was perpetual, unless broken up by some favourable circumstance, their emancipation, when it did take place, being generally the result of a death-bed penitence, or the bounty of a more than usually pious individual, who hoped by such means to buy a passport into Heaven. As a climax to this scene, the slave might be whipt, or branded, or yoked to a team, and driven like the horse or ox, and he might be sold into any country,—into France for instance, or into Rome. With time, however, this state of things was somewhat

ameliorated. The milder spirit of a monarch, influenced it may be in some measure by the clergy, compelled, or persuaded, his witenagemot to pass a law enjoining that no Christian or innocent man should be sold from the land. The slave, moreover, was allowed to accumulate property of his own, as is sufficiently manifest from his being subject to pecuniary fines by way of punishment for lighter offences. Thus if an esne did theow work against his lord's consent on Sunday evening after sun-set and before the moon-set, he was condemned to pay him eight shillings. If he made offerings to the devils,—by which of course we are to understand, idols,—or voluntarily ate flesh upon a fast-day, he was, according to a law of Æthelbert, to forfeit six shillings, or, in default of money, to pay for it with his skin. If one slave killed another, who had committed no offence, he was to make compensation with all his goods; but if he slew a freeman, he was to pay a hundred shillings and to be delivered up by his master, who had also to add the price of another man. But it would be tedious to follow the laws of this monarch through all their ramifications; they provide a graduated scale for every conceivable offence, leaving little or nothing to the discretion of those, who had to sentence the culprit.

It was reserved for the great Alfred to strike the first blow at the very root of this servile system. He could not, it is true, emancipate the existing slaves or their future families; such a measure would have been too dangerous an attack upon vested rights, that unmeaning phrase by which power in all ages has sought to justify its aggressions upon the rest of society; it would unquestionably have provoked a general spirit of resistance that must have shaken his throne, and perhaps even overturned it; but since he could not at once uproot the evil, he provided for its gradual abolition; with consummate art he prevailed upon his witenagemot, who it is likely did not see so far into the future as himself, to enact that, "if any one buys a Christian slave, let such bondsman serve for six years; upon the seventh let him be free without payment; in whatever clothes he first came, in such let him depart, and, if he have a wife, let her go with him. If, however, the lord should have given him a wife, let her and her children belong to the lord. And if the slave should say, "I do not wish to leave my lord, nor my wife, nor my children, nor my heri-

tage, then let his lord conduct him to the church door, and perforate his ear with an awl in token that he is henceforth to be a slave."

Before this wise enactment the servile class had been more numerous than the free, and the disproportion went on every day augmenting, the old law carrying in itself the elements of their increase; henceforth their numbers slowly, but surely, diminished; the current, which had constantly set one way, now flowed steadily though not quite so rapidly in an opposite direction: from that very circumstance it became the interest of the masters to treat their serfs with at least as much consideration as was requisite to preserve a property, which, when once gone, could not easily be replaced. The salutary progress of the law was indeed slow, yet, if we reflect for a single instant upon the tenacity with which men cling to any abuses tending to their individual profit, and how strongly infatuated they are in considering every thing as their right that custom has made such, although in defiance of common sense and the most obvious principles of justice, we shall give full credit to the wisdom and sagacity of Alfred.

We now come to a more pleasing subject, and one which has had a more direct influence upon our own days. Both gilds and clubs may be traced up to the Anglo-Saxon ages, and spring from the same source,—the gild-scipe—which in after times branched out into distinct social forms, yet each bearing an analogy to the other. Like the modern benefit societies, the gild-scipe was a club both for mutual advantage and for conviviality, the latter not being so much an avowed purpose as an accessory to the principal object. Many notices of such societies are still extant, but a general idea of all may be gathered from one, though of course each had some regulations peculiar to itself.

The first and most common law was that of mutual fidelity, the body pledging itself to assist and protect the individual. In most cases there existed a provision for the burial of a defunct member, as well as for the purchase of a fitting number of masses for his soul, without which, in those ages, the last duties to the dead were not considered to have been sufficiently fulfilled. Heavy fines were inflicted upon any who refused to help, or who

did injury to a brother of their society; and if a member was slain by a stranger, the whole gild was bound to avenge his death, and abide by the consequences. So too if one of the fraternity killed a stranger, and was too poor to meet the fine demanded by law, he was to be assisted in the payment by a general contribution from his gild.

In various documents we find mention made of *free gilds*, though it does not appear in what they differed from any others, or whether there really was any difference beyond the mere variation of phrase. Perhaps they were so called from being composed of members, who had passed through their apprenticeship and were free as being masters of their several crafts and trades. There were also gilds of ecclesiastics, the object of which it is not easy to divine, unless they consisted of the inferior clergy, who might thus hope to protect their rights and immunities against their superiors, with whom it is certain they did at times come in collision, however they might band together against the laity. In the sea-ports and mercantile towns such associations were formed for the carrying out commercial speculations upon a larger scale than could be done by the capital of individuals. But indeed such fraternities have not been confined to one age or to one country, nor is it likely they should be, their uses being so obvious and so generally applicable. That they existed in Italy during Trajan's reign is certain from a letter of Pliny to the Emperor, the præfect evidently confounding the Christian meetings for the purposes of worship with the political hetærias, which, to judge from appearances, must have had the same objects as the German Tugenbund and other affiliated societies of the same description.

With all the aids that could be derived from the union of capital, trade, as we have just mentioned, was at a low ebb during the early times of Saxon rule in England, both merchants and dealers being poor, and the latter often in a servile condition. It was seldom either that the operatives carried on their respective crafts upon their own account, for the great, the rich, and the clergy usually retained servants able to supply them with all the articles of manufacture then in use. Hence in monasteries we constantly find millers, smiths, carpenters, architects, agriculturists, fishermen, and illuminators. There was no middling class

to create a demand for general craftsmen, and the few wants of the poor in that rude state were easily supplied. Nay, as we advance to the time of the Norman Conquest, we see the clergy themselves excelling in the mechanical arts. Dunstan was particularly famous in this respect; he could draw and paint the patterns for a lady's robe; he was an *isern-smith*,—that is, a black-smith,—and could work craftily both in gold and silver, his skill in the first of these capacities being proved by two bells that he made for the church at Abingdon. His friend, bishop Ethelwold, was no less distinguished for his operative skill. He made two bells of smaller size for the same church, but what has more especially attracted the notice of the chroniclers, was a table of curious workmanship. Similar instances of skill are attributed to other bishops; nor can we be surprized at ecclesiasties attaining such proficiency in the mechanical arts, when we are told how it was encouraged by the Anglo-Saxon monarchs, who seldom failed to honour and reward it, never for a moment deeming it incompatible with the clerical character and more sacred avocations. One king made an abbot of a monk, simply for his skill as a goldsmith: and Edgar, going yet farther, absolutely commands that "every priest, for the sake of advancing science, shall diligently study handycrafts." Thus we see that the state of things, which philosophers like Rousseau are so fond of recommending, prevailed at one time amongst the Anglo-Saxons almost to the extent they desire, though certainly without producing any of the beneficial effects which they have painted in such glowing colours. The wants of men, being few, were easily provided for, and this at first sounds well enough; but what was the inevitable result?—there was not, and could not be, sufficient employment for the mass of which society consisted, so that a large portion, if it wished to live at all, had no choice but to betake itself to violence and rapine. Men can not be brought to understand the religion or the morality, which condemns them and their families to starvation, while others are revelling in abundance, besides that in the Anglo-Saxon times the poor must have remembered it was the strong hand alone that had given original possession, and in this they would find a sufficient excuse to justify rapine in their own eyes, though it might fail to satisfy others. They had moreover a present example set them by the better classes; too many of the nobles, like the German knights

of old, lived by a system of plunder, which, if reprobated by the laws, was hardly esteemed dishonourable. Hence the woods were infested with robbers of all degrees, the roads in every part of the kingdom became insecure, and the innocent traveller was himself an object of suspicion to authority. That such was the case to the full extent here described is evident from the penal enactments besetting the course of the way-farer. "If," says a law of Withred, "a stranger or foreigner should wander from the high way, and then neither call out nor sound a horn, he is to be taken for a thief and killed, or redeemed by a fine." The truth seems to be that as few people in the then state of society ventured to leave their towns or burghs, unless impelled by necessity, the law came to regard all travellers with an eye of distrust, so that the distant parts of the island became nearly as much estranged from each other as if they had been situated in opposite quarters of the globe.

At length a change in this state of things began to be slowly visible. A middle class arose, infusing health and order into the social body. The independent part of the community went on increasing from the frequent manumission of slaves, and as a natural and inevitable result of the law of Alfred before mentioned. Some of the serfs so released from bondage became what we should now term farmers on a small scale, tilling for their own profit the land they rented either of the great or of the clergy. Others betook themselves to the burgs or towns, when, as the king was lord of the free, they generally fell under his protection, and became free burghers. The king's gafol they paid either in money, or by occasional service, or at times by compensation in sheep, or cattle, or iron, or any other valuable commodity.

So far all is plain enough; it is easy to comprehend how the free burgers came under the king's protection; but this was far from being always the case, for we frequently find them under ecclesiastics or other great men, and of whomsoever they held, the gafols, services, and customs, were for the most part rigorously exacted. In many other respects the so called free burger was any thing but free as the word is now understood; at Hereford he could not quit the city without permission of the gerefa; nor sell his house, unless he found a buyer willing to perform in his stead the accustomed services; and even then the gerefa claimed

the third penny of the sale. In addition to these taxes upon individual freedom, if the burger from poverty could not discharge the usual dues, he was compelled to give up his house without any consideration to the gerefa, whose duty it then became to take care that it did not remain empty, lest the king should lose any part of what ought to come to him.

In process of time, as trade and commerce advanced, the numbers of such burgs grew rich enough to purchase property in them, receiving the gafol and the customs while the king retained the legal jurisdiction. This was another great step towards a better and freer state of things. Yet even where the individual had not so far advanced, the condition of the burger had one great superiority over that of the serf; the dues exacted of him were fixed and definite, and, if sometimes onerous, they still were not actually oppressive. In this portion of the social body we have no doubt are the first germs to be found of that mercantile class, which, in after times, and under the various forms of merchant and trader, has far exceeded in numbers, and often in wealth, the entire landed aristocracy.

Such in all ages as well as in all countries has been the manner of social advance. Land at first is the only property giving rank and power, with a right,—the right of the strong over the weak,—to compel the many to cultivate the soil, not for their own benefit, but to enrich their masters. As arts are called into action by superfluous wealth, and the wants of mankind are multiplied by leisure and indulgence, trade and commerce arise, forming a new sort of aristocracy, but with this advantage over that of land, its benefits are extended to the many instead of to the few.

We must now for a moment retrace our steps.

It would seem that even in the time of Aldhelm the Anglo-Saxons understood and practiced the arts of weaving, embroidering, and dyeing, in addition to the crafts already mentioned. The ladies too excelled in needle work, the daughters of kings not disdaining to ply the needle and the distaff. From their constant use of the latter arose the application of the term *spindle-side*, to the female part of a family, while the males were

designated as the *spear-side* from their use of that implement in war and in hunting.

It will be easily imagined that alehouses, or, as they were sometimes called, *ale-shops*, were not wanting amongst a people so notoriously fond of drinking. The law, however, regarded such places of resort with a jealous eye. In the edicts of the Northumbrian clergy a priest frequenting the ale house is ordered to make compensation, though in what precise way it is not stated, and king Æthelred ordains a heavier fine than usual for murder committed there, as if the crime assumed a deeper dye from the place wherein it was perpetrated. By another law of Hlothar and Eadric, if any one drew a sword where men were drinking, he was to forfeit one shilling to the owner of the place, and twelve shillings to the king; if blood were shed upon the floor, the culprit had to compensate the taverner for the violation of his asylum besides paying a fine of fifty shillings to the king. Altogether it would seem as if the mere penalties exacted for different offences must have formed no inconsiderable item in the receipts of the royal exchequer.

Strange to say, although internal trade was very limited, and consequently there could have been little occasion for commerce with other parts of the world, yet voyages for the purposes of traffic were common at an early period, men going to the distant north—distant for those days of imperfect navigation—with a view to catch whales and sea-whales, as they seem to have called the walrus. From the skins of the former they made ropes, and the latter were valuable to them, "because," says Ohther, "they have very good bone in their teeth." An amusing account of this voyage is preserved in the works of Alfred, which cannot fail to remind the reader of the quaint narratives given by some of the early English adventurers, long after the Anglo-Saxon period.

Markets existed in many parts of England after the Norman Conquest, as appears by the mention in Domesday book of the tolls paid by them. At times too such markets seem to have enjoyed the privilege of monopoly, it not being then understood that though monopoly might be a private benefit, it must be a public injury. Other impolitic restrictions there were upon trade, which show how little its real nature was comprehended. At Chester, for instance, no ships could enter, or quit, the port

without the king's leave, the punishment for any violation of this law being a fine of forty shillings. A similar fine was inflicted upon those, who, having the skins of martens for sale, should presume to dispose of them before the king's governor had seen them.

The same objections can not be urged against the laws by which the Anglo-Saxons endeavoured to compel traders to be honest. The use of false weights subjected the offender to a fine of four shillings, while he, who sold bad ale, was mulcted to the same amount, or set upon a dunghill by way of pillory. The instances of these laws and penalties have been taken from the usages that prevailed at Chester, but it seems highly probable that the same, or something very nearly so, were the customs of the whole kingdom.

The mode of buying and selling was regulated by specific laws, the chief object of which was to prevent, or detect, theft, as well as to secure the due payment of the appointed tolls.

Hospitality was a general virtue amongst the Anglo-Saxons, as it is amongst most people that stand upon the debatable land between barbarism and civilization. Every attention would seem to have been lavished upon the stranger, who indeed without such assistance must have found nearly as much difficulty in travelling through England, as we do in exploring the untrodden wilds of America. They brought water for his hands, they washed and dried his feet; the host himself in many cases performed this servile duty, and refreshed him with mulled wine. Such hospitality was the more deserving praise as it brought upon the giver of it a dangerous responsibility. "If," say the laws of Hlothar and Eadric, "any one shall for three nights entertain in his house a merchant, or stranger coming from beyond the boundaries, and shall supply him with food, and the guest so received shall commit any crime, then must the host bring his guest to justice, or be answerable for it. †"

Such precautionary enactments do not seem to mark any advanced stage of society. In contradiction however to such

† The original Anglo-Saxon simply says, "or lose his right," a somewhat ambiguous phrase, which is not much amended by the Latin translation, "rectum perdat." I have therefore ventured to paraphrase it.

appearances, we have ample proof of the existence of chivalric institutions, though less refined than those introduced at a later period by the Normans. If we had no other authority for this fact, it would be placed beyond doubt by the narrative which Ingulphus gives us of a certain Heward, or Hereward. "This youth, of a fierce and warlike disposition, had left England for Flanders on account of the displeasure of his relatives, who would no longer tolerate the outrages which he daily and hourly committed upon his feebler-minded companions. After he had been for some time in this voluntary state of exile, William the Norman came over, and by the battle of Hastings made himself master of all England, and distributed amongst the companions of his victory the lordships, baronies, bishoprics, and religious property of the whole kingdom. This news was not long in reaching Hereward, with the additional evil tidings, that his father Leofric was dead, and his estate given by the new king to a certain Norman, while his widowed mother was subjected to many wrongs and grievances, without the least power of redressing them. Hereward was not a man to submit quietly to things of this kind, nor did he suffer himself to be daunted by the overwhelming power of his opponent, though every other Saxon after a struggle as brief as it was fruitless had bowed before it, or fled into the fastness of the Welsh mountains. Taking his wife, Thurfried, with him, he hastened back to England, where he soon collected a band of warriors, and having infused into them a portion of his own indomitable spirit he attacked the enemies of his mother, and quickly drove them from his estates. Then he considered that he was now at the head of a body of valiant men, as well as of some *milites*, and that he was not legitimately girded with the belt in military fashion; wherefore, selecting from his cohort a few tyros to be legitimately consecrated with himself to warfare, he went to his uncle, by name Brandus, the abbot of Peterborough, and—as I have heard from my predecessor, the Lord Abbot Wulketule, and many others,—much given to charity and adorned with every virtue. Having first made confession of all his sins and received absolution for them, he earnestly entreated to be made a legitimate *miles*; for it was the custom of the English that he, who was to be legitimately consecrated to warfare, should on the evening preceding the day of his consecration make a penitent confession to some bishop, abbot, monk, or other priest, and being absolved

should pass the night in a church, and abandon himself to prayer, devotion, and mortification. The next morning he was to hear mass and offer his sword upon the altar, and then after the gospel had been read, the priest having sanctified the weapon was to hang it about the neck of the *miles* with the benediction. Lastly at the same mass he was to partake in the holy mysteries of Christ's body, when at length he became a true *miles*. This mode, however, of consecrating a miles the Normans held in abomination, not deeming such a one legitimate, but looking upon him as a sluggard *eques* and degenerate *Quirite*."

Thus far Ingulphus, who must have been well acquainted with the manners he was describing; and yet we can not understand why the Normans were averse to this consecration of knights, when in after times at least the same practice not unfrequently obtained amongst themselves. A brave soldier might no doubt be knighted by the simple accolade on the field of battle, but it is no less true that many received that honour with the ceremonies here set down as peculiar to the Saxons.

It may be difficult to say how the word, *miles*, would be most aptly rendered, but there can be no doubt of its denoting a chivalric rank of the first degree. Alfred the Great invariably translates *miles* by some Anglo-Saxon phrase expressive of peculiar dignity, the instances of this being so numerous as to place the matter beyond question. At the same time it should always be borne in mind that the word, *knight*, had itself a different meaning at different periods. We find it in the early ages signifying "a youth," then "an attendant," or more dignified sort of dependent, and at one time it was used to designate a state of chastity and bachelorship. Thus we are told in the *Book of Constitutions*, "that beoth a right-like life when a knight remains in his knighthood 'till he marries a right maiden, and have her then afterwards, and no other while she lives."

We next find it superseding the word *thegn*, which was probably the original Saxon term for *miles*. Upon this subject Turner well observes that the knight "even in the full chivalric meaning was a military servant of somebody, either of the king, the queen, a favourite lady, or some person of dignity. In a state very similar to this are the *cnightes* in the Saxon wills. They appear to us,

in like manner, in a rank far above a servant in the Saxon gildscipes. Of these fraternities cnihts constituted a part, and are distinctly mentioned, though with reference to some lord to whom they were subordinate; a situation which seems best explained by supposing them free and respectable military dependents."

Another sign, that can not be mistaken, of the existence of chivalry amongst the Saxons, is to be found in the fact of their holding tournaments not very widely differing from those of the more refined Normans. In the Constitutions of Henry the First, of Germany, published in 934, we are told of equestrian games to be solemnly held in the Empire, open to all, provided only they are of noble birth, who are to contend therein with every kind of customary weapon. Then follows a list of those denied participation in them, this exclusive catalogue breathing very much the spirit of Norman chivalry. Whoever had been guilty of blaspheming against religion, or who had knowingly done any thing by word or deed against the imperial dignity, who had wronged maid, wife, or widow, personally or in their goods, was to be torn from his horse, and set astride upon the lists. The same punishment is extended to various other offenders,—to the coward, the adulterer, and the homicide. Merchants also were excluded, as not being entitled from their inferior rank to participate in the sports of the nobles. But it would be tedious to enter into all these details, for the chapter of exclusions embraces no less than thirteen heads or clauses, all having the same object of giving dignity and splendour to the tournament.

During the time of these games, and for fourteen days before as well as afterwards, the place or city in which they chanced to be celebrated, remained free to all except thieves, heretics, and traitors. The area for the tournament was surrounded by lists, that is by a series of posts set firmly in the earth, and connected by transverse beams, within which none were allowed to intrude but those in some way engaged in the forthcoming passage of arms, as the Normans in after times loved to designate such warlike sports. Every combatant was first to be confessed and absolved, a very necessary preparative, considering how often this mimicry of battle was attended by the same fatal results. Each count might bring with him, if he chose, six companions and no

more; a baron was allowed four; a knight, three; and oth only two, unless they maintained them at their own cost. even without these certain guides it would be natural to infer t the Anglo-Saxons must have had either tournaments, or someth very like them, since we find games imitative of war existi among all nations, the most barbarous no less than the most re fined. They are found amongst the savages of the South-Se islands, and they equally existed amongst the Greeks,—the t extremes of the social scale—though of course without the hig chivalrous feelings that distinguished the Norman tournaments.

I have before alluded, though slightly to the music of th Anglo-Saxons; but, scanty as are our materials, the subje deserves, and must have a more lengthened notice. From th account given by Bede of the poet Ceadmon, it is plain that mus was an universal accomplishment of our early ancestors, wh from their harshness and love of war have been too often and too hastily set down for barbarians. The venerable historian tells us that Ceadmon, a celebrated poet of those days, received hi inspired art, not from man, but from Heaven, and in this way paid nothing for the acquisition. As a natural consequence of the way in which he obtained the gift, he could never indite any thing light or trivial, but only such as pertained to religion, and befitted a religious tongue. He however did not attain this faculty till he had reached a mature age, and hence it happened "that at festivals, when for the sake of mirth all were called upon to sing in rotation, Ceadmon upon seeing the harp coming round to him started up in the middle of the banquet, and hurried home."

That men in those early days were keenly alive to musical impressions, is sufficiently attested by a pleasing anecdote related in the Ramesian History so often before referred to. Briefly told it amounts to this.

Upon a certain time king Canute was sailing to Ely, to assist at the monastery there, according to custom, in celebrating the "Purification of the Virgin Mary." As he approached the shore, the chaunt of the monks reached his ear, solemnly and sweetly pealing over the waters, and so delighted him that he ordered the boatmen to rest upon their oars while he enjoyed the sound

without interruption. The boats of his followers were still at some distance, when suddenly in the fullness of his joy he stood up, and gave went to his feelings in a song of which one verse alone has come down to us—

"Sweetly sang the monks of Ely
As king Canute sailed along;
Row, knights, row to Ely harbour,
Let us together hear their song."

The same writer, who like Alcuin composed a treatise on music, informs us several instruments were in use at that early period, such as the organ, the viol, the harp, the atola, the psaltery, the drum, the cymbal, the horn, the trumpet, the flute, and a sort of lyre with four strings struck by a plectrum. His admiration indeed for music was of the most enthusiastic kind. After having declared that "its utility is great and wonderful, and highly virtuous since it has dared to cross the threshold, which no other science has dared to do," he goes on to say, with Boethius, "among the seven liberal arts it is the principal, for nothing endures without it. The world itself is said to be constituted of a certain concord of sweet sounds, and Heaven itself to revolve under the modulations of harmony. It is proved to be amongst all sciences the most praiseworthy, the most courteous, the most cheerful, the most lovely, for it renders a man liberal, pleasant, affable, mirthful, and amiable. It stirs the passions of men, awaking in them a different feeling, as in battles, when the sound of the trumpet inflames the combatants, and the louder it peals the fiercer become their spirits for the conflict. What need of many words? it encourages men to endure labour, it soothes the fatigue of all work by the modulations of the voice. It refreshes the troubled mind since it takes away grief and head-ache, dispels impure emotions, languor, and depraved humours."

In those days, as in our own, the organ played a principal part in church-choirs, and would seem to have attained a very considerable degree of perfection, approaching indeed very nearly to the instrument as we now see it. An anonymous treatise, published formerly among the works of Bede, describes it after Cassiodorus, an author who flourished in the sixth century. "The organ is, as it were, a sort of tower, fashioned of various pipes, from which by

the wind of bellows a most abundant volume of sound is obtained, and that it may produce appropriate modulations, it is constructed in the interior part of certain wooden tongues, which being skilfully depressed by the fingers of a master emit a sweet and lofty song."

It has been asserted by many writers that the keys of the organ were originally some inches wide, and were played on like carillons with a blow of the fist. Some indeed have gone so far as to declare that very nearly up to the time of the Reformation keys of this kind were still used, the organ having neither the semitones nor a register of stops. Such an opinion, however, is fully refuted by the passage from Bede just quoted, "the skilful depression by a master's fingers" bearing no analogy to the mode of playing carillons. Upon this subject the learned Wacherbarth, in his admirable treatise upon the music of the Anglo-Saxons, quotes an enigmatical epigram, usually attributed to the Emperor Julian, which, if we accept his interpretation of the text, and it certainly appears to be the right one,—would at once settle the question, supposing that any doubt could yet remain. At the same time it should be observed that Dr Burney has given a different interpretation of the same text, and one opposed to our view of the matter. However this may be, it is quite certain that the metal generally used by the Anglo-Saxons for organ-pipes was copper, as it appears by the following passage which I translate freely from the Ramesian history—"He (the Earl) gave thirty pounds for making the copper-pipes of an organ, which resting with their openings in close order upon one of the snail-like windings in its bosom, and being on festivals struck with a strong blast from the bellows, gave forth an uncommonly sweet melody, and far-resounding peal." There can be no doubt either but that they used to gild the outward pipes, as is generally done now a-days; for the fact is distinctly stated by Aldhelm in his poem, "De Laude Virginum," first noticed by the indefatigable Sharon Turner, to whom the student of all that relates to the Anglo-Saxons is so deeply indebted.

Connected with music, and perhaps it should have preceded it, comes the subject of Anglo-Saxon poetry, which like the former mingled not a little with their domestic habits; not that the great mass of the people, or even their superiors were capable of read-

ing, but they loved the songs and recitations of their bards, the only records of the past to which they could have access. The original form of Anglo-Saxon poetry was the simplest and most imperfect kind of language used by the people, and its progress was precisely the same that we observe in children. At first the child uses no words but the names of things, expressing by them both motion and action, without any attempt at conjugating. Then come the moods and tenses, secondary meanings of nouns, and the use of particles. Now in the oldest Saxon poems we meet with exactly the same thing; for instance—

With pale light
Bright stars
Moon lesseneth—

meaning by these unconnected words that (the) moon with (her) pale light lesseneth (the) bright stars.

Periphrasis of the most exaggerated kind was a constant characteristic of the vernacular poetry of those days. A single example will serve to prove and illustrate this peculiarity, which evidently arises from the writer's deficient power of expression; he labours with some dim confused notions of grandeur to which he is unable to give birth:

Now we should praise
The guardian of the Heavenly kingdom;
The mighty Creator,
And the thoughts of his mind,
Glorious father of his works!
As he, of every glory
Eternal Lord
Established the beginning;
So he first shaped
The earth for the children of men,
And the Heavens for its canopy.
Holy Creator!
The middle region,
The guardian of mankind,
The eternal Lord
Afterwards made
The ground for men,
Almighty ruler!

Our estimate of Anglo-Saxon poetry will be still farther lessened when we find that they had no rules whatever for rhythm. Bede expressly tells us that "rhythm is the modulated composition of words, not by metrical law, but regulated in the number of syllables by the judgment of the ear, as are the verses of our vulgar poets." In this last phrase I presume that Bede had no derogatory meaning, but only intended to signify those who wrote in the native or vulgar tongue, *la lingua vulgare* of the Italians,—as opposed to those who wrote in Latin.

That ballads, or something very similar to them, were the earliest form of poetry appears from various circumstances. Alfred tells us that "Aldhelm composed a trivial song, which was still sung in my own time"—that is, two centuries after it was first written; and by way of excusing the learned prelate for this fancied degradation he goes on to say that he did it to instruct and reform the people, who were not to be managed by severity or excommunications; "wherefore the holy man, standing upon a bridge that joined the town to the country, met those coming out, as if he professed the art of singing."

William of Malmsbury also repeatedly uses the word, *cantilena*, which can not be better rendered than by ballad, itself used to express the simplest and most popular form of poetry. "I have written," he says, "these things honestly of the king, rather following songs that are partly worn out by the lapse of time, than learning them from books elaborated for the instruction of posterity." It is thus indeed that all early history is written, for ballads exist and are handed down orally from father to son, long before a nation possesses any authentic written records. So it was with the early Roman annals; Livy, it is now acknowledged by all scholars, has drawn the first part of his history from sources of this kind, and hence comes that mixture of truth and fiction, which makes his first books read more like the romance of history than like history itself.

In another place William of Malmsbury says, when speaking of King Edgar, "the other infamies, which I shall hereafter mention, have been propagated by songs."

From these various facts as well as the custom of sending the harp round at festivals for those to sing who were able, it is plain that ballads were the popular amusement of a very early period, being the only record of their heroes, dead or living, and the vehicle also of religious instruction. Love too entered into some of these compositions, but this was not often the case, notwithstanding the high reverence with which the Anglo-Saxons regarded women, so that we may almost suspect their devotion to the female sex had little of that tenderness which characterized the ardent troubadours of the South.

The whole system of Anglo-Saxon poetry announces art,

though of the rudest kind, but not a spark of inspiration. In this respect it is far below that of the Northmen in fancy and vigour. The best narrative poem, or romance in verse, that has come down to us, is Beowulf, but it will not for a moment bear comparison with the German Niebelungen-Lied, or with others of the like stamp, wherein, however rude the language, there is no want of the imaginative faculty. The frequent admixture too of whole lines of Latin in some of the Anglo-Saxon poetry gives it a very barbarous appearance.

But besides their vernacular rhymes, with or without this mingling of different tongues, the learned of those days were fond of writing Latin poetry, in the composition of which it would seem as if, neglecting the pure classics, they had taken for their models the writers that flourished in the decay of literature. In no one instance have they attained the happy elegance of Vida, or Sanazarro, or of any other of the Italian imitators.

We have next to consider the prose literature of the Anglo-Saxons, though it has not much in it to command attention, simply as such, and independent of the historic information that may be gleaned from it amidst a ponderous heap of matter without interest. But it could not well have been otherwise, when there were so few to give it encouragement. The higher classes, as they owed their original pre-eminence in the state to their skill in the art of arms, naturally brought up their children in a way most adapted to produce the same excellence and secure the same position with themselves. At the same time the multitude were too constantly employed in providing the means of subsistence to think of wasting their time upon books, even had they known how to read them; and the monks, in their religious ceremonies and duties, the building of churches, and the cultivating of their grounds, had almost as little leisure for learned pursuits as the multitude, besides that for a long time after the introduction of Christianity they were much too poor as a body to purchase manuscripts. It is, however highly favourable to the Anglo-Saxon character that within a hundred years after the first introduction of knowledge amongst them such a man as Bede should have risen from their ranks, a writer whose numerous works * are in themselves a very fair compendium of the learning

* The genuine works of Bede are contained in 12 vols 8vo edit. J. A. Giles, Lond. 1812.

and science then existing. Alcuin too and Aldhelm deserve the same honourable mention for their unceasing exertions to spread and augment all that was known in their day; and many of their pupils were not unworthy of them. Of course so favourable an estimate must be strictly understood with reference to the age in which they lived. Their style was often vicious in the extreme; sometimes deformed by continued alliteration, every word in a sentence beginning with the same letter; and at other running into the figurative style of Persian poetry. Bede alone forms an honourable exception. His prose is for the most part simple and unaffected, and if not eloquent it is precise and clear.

When we look back upon the history of those days with an impartial eye, our wonder will be, not that the Anglo-Saxons did so little, but that they did so much. There was more than once period when knowledge began to raise its head and promised to make immense strides, but ever on such occasions it was again repressed and chilled by the political circumstances of the age. The calm which prevailed in the earlier part of Egbert's days was like the momentary glance of the sun in spring, when the flowers seem to rejoice in the light and expand their cups to meet it; but the storm came,—the ruinous invasion of the Northmen,—and bud and blossom were scattered on all sides. With the usual ferocity of ignorance they laid waste the land wherever they came, burnt the monasteries,—the asylums in which knowledge had till then found a place of refuge—and this war of necessity became the habit of a people, who if they meant to live at all must live with the sword unceasingly in hand. It is true that Alfred after a time brought the semblance of peace to the island, and wisely profited by the interval to do all that it was possible for one man to effect; but the attack of Hastings in the latter part of his reign again brought back the fatal necessity of the sword.

Amidst this constant din of warfare, the short intervals of peace that rose up like so many green oases in the desert, were by no means unproductive in other ways. Some slight chemical knowledge they must have acquired in these happy intervals, or they could not have dissolved gold, as we find them doing, for the illumination of their manuscripts. They were able also to gild both marble and glass, for which they had more than one formula.

This knowledge might have been, and most probably was, much more practical than scientific, and confined to a very few facts, the result of chance, or mere experiment, undirected by theory; but such have at all times been the first steps where science was concerned.

Before the time of Alfred the medical knowledge of the Anglo-Saxons did not amount to much. The notion that most of the diseases, to which man is incident, proceeded from evil spirits, naturally led to spells and charms to counteract them, of which more will be said presently when we come to speak of the Anglo-Saxon superstitions. When the first dawnings of Christianity had to a certain extent dispelled these ideas, the charms of a Pagan age were succeeded by the nostrums of women, generally advanced in years, to whom for the most part the care of the sick devolved, and who prescribing at random would often effect cures without understanding the real nature either of the disease or of the remedy.

But a better time succeeded. So early as the seventh century medicine was followed by men of some knowledge—such at least as their age afforded—who made of it a profession, an improvement owing no doubt to the ecclesiastics. They not only introduced from Rome a variety of books upon the healing science, but had almost in every monastery one brother, acting as the physician of his neighbourhood. The seed thus sown did not altogether fall upon an unproductive soil. Several Saxon manuscripts yet exist upon medical botany, their remedies being chiefly of a vegetable nature, as indeed might be expected, the knowledge of the qualities and use of minerals being an advanced chapter in the book of science. Even in the present age, enlightened as it is by treading in the path first opened up by the genius of Bacon, how little is known in comparison with what remains to be learnt upon this subject.

As a specimen of their medical notions we will give their recipe for the "foot-adle—the foot-ail—that is the gout, as given in the MS. Cott: Vitellius; c. 3. "Take the herb, datulus or titulosa, which we call greater crauleac—tuberose isis. Take the heads of it, and dry them very much, and take thereof a penny-weight and a half, and the pear-tree and Roman bark, and cummin, and

a fourth part of laurel berries, and of the other herbs half a pennyweight of each, and six pepper-corns, and grind all to dust, and put two egg-shells full of wine. This is true leechcraft. Give it the man to drink till he be well."

Their skill in surgery was much of the same kind; and yet they effected some cures, as related by Bede, that must seem wonderful, all circumstances considered, although assisted by saintly prayers, to which indeed he seems in a great measure inclined to attribute the success. That venerable writer tells us of a youth, who having fallen from his horse upon a stone, while racing with his young companions, fractured his skull, and broke his thumb. By dint of prayers and surgical aid combined, serious as the case would seem to have been, he was sufficiently recovered by the next day to ride abroad again, which he did undeterred from such courses by his previous warning.

A second tale is related by Bede of a pauper, who besides being dumb was afflicted with a cutaneous disease of the head; the dumbness, the archbishop Ædiluuald removed by his prayers; the eruption was cured by a surgeon.

Venesection also was in use, but the operation does not appear to have been performed with much skill; and even if it had been, it must often have proved useless, if not absolutely injurious, since its use was directed not so much by the real or supposed necessity of the case as by the season and courses of the moon. Bede gives us with infinite care and precision a long list of tides when bleeding, except in particular cases, was forbidden, and then goes on to say that "there are many Egyptian days in which it is by no means permitted to bleed either man or beast." The *Egyptian Day*, as he tells us in another place, begins at the setting of the sun and the rising of the evening star.

In a Saxon manuscript, in the Cottonian library, we are told that the second, third, fifth, sixth, ninth, eleventh, fifteenth, seventeenth, and twentieth, days of the month are bad for bleeding. Some other days also are enumerated, on which the operation would be hurtful except at particular hours. Of course there was no want of well attested examples to support this doctrine, for what creed was ever so gross or improbable that it did not find both witnesses and believers?

In the same library we find another manuscript, but under a different head, from which we extract a Saxon remedy for the *lungen-adle*—lung-ail, i. e. consumption,—followed by the similar prescription for *fot-adle*—foot-ail, i. e. gout,—already given in the preceding page.

With lungen-adle—"Take hwite hare human (white horehound) and yspo (hyssop) and rudan (rue) and galloc (sow-bread, or cyclamen), and brysewyrt and brunwyrt (brown wort,) and wude merce (woodmint), and grundeswylian (groundsel), of each twenty penny-weights; and take one sester (fifteen pints) full of old ale, and seethe the herbs 'till the liquor be half boiled away. Drink every day fasting a neap-full cold, and in the evening as much warm.

With fot-adle—Take the herb, datulus or titulosa, which we call crauleac (tuberose isis.) &c.

If these recipes do not say much for the medical skill of the Anglo-Saxons, let it be remembered that our pharmacopœias of not more than a century since contain remedies to the full as absurd, and as little likely to benefit any one but the prescriber.

Connected with this subject, and in many instances forming a part of it, are the superstitions of our early forefathers. Primus in orbe deos fecit timor," says the poet Statius; and applied to the Pagan deities, or to superstition in any of its numerous forms, the maxim is no doubt as true as it becomes false when applied to the worship of the One Omnipotent. But it is the fear which belongs to ignorance, and the poet should have numbered among his agents both vanity and hope. Hence it is that when the causes of effects were but little understood, every unusual attribute of nature was deified; and when the pure light of Christianity forbade this multiplication of Gods, mankind, still true to their old instinct, borrowed the witches, fairies, necromancers, and demons of earlier time to account for what, without such aid, continued perfectly unintelligible to their ignorance. It is not so many years since bells were supposed to drive away the fiend who watched for the soul at the moment of its parting from the body, and though the belief has passed away under the mingled influence of knowledge and religion, the custom still remains, a token and a landmark of the social advance.

Amongst the Anglo-Saxons the practicers of witchcraft had various appellations. The witch was called *wicca;* the wizzard,

wiglaer, a compound of *wig*, an idol, and *laer*, learning, wh
would almost seem to intimate something holy in his charact
scin-læca in its literal sense meant "a shining dead body," bu
was used also for a phantom or apparition, and as designating
capable of producing such things; *goldorcraeftig* implied
powerful in incantations; *morthwyrta* signified "a worshipper
the dead," if taken in its proper acceptation; *galdra*, magic; *h*
omens; *wilweorthunga*, fountain-worship; *licwiglunga*, inca
tions of the dead; *dry*,—evidently from the same family as
druda, and druid—was a general name for a magician, and
also used to designate their veneficial arts,—*unlybban*
that is, destructive of life.

The law was particularly severe against witches and wizzar
classing them with perjurers and *horewenan*, literally excreme
but metaphorically used for prostitutes. One and all of the
were to be deprived of their goods, and driven from the la
unless they ceased from such evil doings. But indeed the notio
of the Anglo-Saxons upon this subject can be studied nowhere
well as in their various enactments against the practice.

In the laws of Eadgar it is written,—"We admonish that ever
priest shall diligently advance Christianity, and shall altogethe
root out Heathendom, and forbid wilweorthunga, and licwiglunga
and hwata, and galdra, and the deification of man, and many
things which are done in divers kinds of witchcraft; in friths plot-
tum, in elms and various other trees, in stones, and other phan-
tasmata, by which those are deceived who ought not to be."

From another law of the same monarch we find that poisoning
was practiced under the guise of witchcraft—"If one man kill
another by wicce-cræfte"—that is, by witchcraft—"let him fast
for seven years, three on bread and water, and for another four
let him fast thrice a week, and for ever repent it."

Again: "If any one causes sickness or death to another, let
him fast for three years; one on bread and water, and for two
more let him fast thrice a week on the like diet; and if the man
die, then let him fast seven years as is here ordained, and let him
for ever bewail his crime."

Other prohibitory statutes, with accompanying penalties, teach

us that they administered philters, both in solid food and liquors, to produce love, or attained the same end by incantations. The practice, moreover, was not confined to the laity, but was in use also amongst the ecclesiastics, whose fasts, by way of punishment, were duly proportioned to their higher or lower rank in the church. In the law regarding them no mention is made of bishops, whom we must therefore suppose to have been untainted with crimes of this kind, or else to have been too great for censure. One instance of such a philtre, with its consequences, has come down to us in all its details. The story, as related in Historia Ramesiensis, runs thus in substance.

The wife of a certain man dying after she had weaned her male infant, the husband for awhile remained disconsolate; but at length took a second wife, who perceiving that his love for her was lessened by his affection for his child, began to rage against the latter with all the fury of a stepmother. Now as women are seldom restrained by fears of any kind from doing what they have once taken into their heads, she considered how she might best gain her husband's love from him, and persuade him to bequeathe his property to her own child when it should be born. With this object in view she sought out a witch, to whom she promised an equal share in the expected spoil; and obtained from her a philtre, which she mingled in her husband's food, whereupon he conceived as strong a passion for her as hatred for the child, the former object of his affection. Her next step was to take advantage of the father's absence to murder the son, when with the help of the witch she buried him in the dead of night, being careful to smoothe down the earth so that no signs of a grave might betray her.

The husband upon his return was easily satisfied for the loss of his child, who according to the woman's tale had strayed somewhere, and could not be found although she had caused a diligent search to be made for him. The suspicion, however, of the neighbours was aroused. Still they could find nothing that might justify them in charging any one with foul play, and the crime would probably have never been discovered but for the imprudent avarice of the stepmother, who refused to keep her compact with the witch, under the idea that no credit would be given to an accusation against one in her circumstances by a

wretched pauper. The witch incensed beyond measure at this denial of her rights immediately went to the bishop and revealed the whole transaction. Hereupon the latter cited both wife and husband to appear before his tribunal. They refused to obey the summons. The bishop fearing to offend the king, for awhile temporized with the delinquents; but at length, when by continued enquiry he had got a full confirmation of the tale, he communicated it to the monarch, as also the refusal of the accused to comply with his citation. At this, Canute, being highly indignant, commanded them to appear before himself, and having interrogated them closely, decided that they should on a stated day go before the bishop,—the man with eleven jurors, the woman with the same number of her own sex—and there clear themselves if they could of the crime imputed to them. When the day came, the crowd was so great that the bishop determined that the trial should take place in the open air, upon a lofty eminence, so that all might see and hear what was passing. Immediately about him were the abbot and the monks of the Ramesian monastery. All being thus arranged, the man knelt, and with outstretched right hand, swore, that he had not his son's death upon his conscience, nor knew by whom he had been slain. Then in full reliance upon his wife's innocence, he wound his right hand in his beard which was unusually long and flowing, and exclaimed, "Oh, bishop, so may God grant me to rejoice in this beard as my wife is free and guiltless of the crime imputed to her!"—But now when he would withdraw his hand, by divine influence the beard cleaved to it; and, on his pulling yet more strongly, he dragged away all the hair from his face, and stood before the whole people deprived of this sign of manhood. At this miracle the people raise a shout, while the monks and other ecclesiastics give praises to God who thus manifests himself in his works. Even the husband now believes his wife guilty, but she still maintained her innocence, whereupon the bishop ordered the ground, which the sorceress had pointed out to be opened, and the child's corpse to be exposed before all the people. At this the woman, unable any longer to deny, threw herself at the bishop's feet, and with tears implored his mercy. Both husband and wife were now found guilty—the one of perjury, though committed in ignorance. A penitence proportioned to their respective crimes was adjudged to either, and the man anxious to

make amends for his former contumacy in refusing to appear at the bishop's citation, presented the abbey of Ramsey with the western part of his lands of Ellesworth, which donation was no doubt the cause of this tale having been preserved in the history of Ramsey abbey.

From the prohibitory laws we learn also that the moon played a no less important part in the Saxon superstitions than it had done in those of the Greeks and Romans. At a later period they were repeated by Canute, who, while denouncing idolators, adds that he considers all to be such, who worship Heathen Gods, the sun or moon, fire or river, torrent or stone, or the wood of any kind of tree, or should effect his objects by any kind of phantoms.

To such an excess did superstition abound among the Anglo-Saxons, that they may be said to have been guided by it in all the actions and purposes of life rather than by the laws of reason. Certain days were propitious, others the reverse; on one day it was wrong to sow seeds, on another it was good to tame animals. Numerous too were the rites and incantations by which evils of every kind might be avoided, or good obtained, and specimens of them are still existing, more than enough to satisfy the most inquisitive upon such subjects. Nor were dreams without their meanings and interpreters. To dream that you held a burning candle in your hand was an omen of much good; so also was it to dream on the first night of the new moon; and if in vision an eagle seemed to be flying above the sleeper, it betokened future dignity to him, less or greater according to the height at which the bird seemed to be soaring. The neighing of horses announced the will of Heaven. The flights and voices of birds were no less received as omens. To learn beforehand the fate of an impending battle, a captive of the opposing nation was placed in the lists against a Saxon champion. As was the issue of this duel, such would be the result of the impending fight.

In many, though not in all instances, the superstitions were the same as those originally practiced by them on the banks of the Elbe, or grew out of the Pagan worship, which they had brought with them from their native land into Britain. It is probable that this older mythology was in all essentials the same

as the religion of the Northmen, the differences of detail being no greater than those occurring in the language of any people who have migrated from their parent stock. The deities included in it were tolerably numerous, some being objects of reverence, and others of dread, who were not less to be propitiated, or to be subdued by appropriate charms and incantations. Seven of these deities gave each a name to one day in the week.

Sunnan-Daeg	—	The Sun's Day.
Monan-Daeg	—	The Moon's Day.
Tiwes-Daeg	—	Tiwes's (that is, Mars's) Day.
Wodnes-Daeg	—	Woden's Day.
Thunres-Daeg	—	Thunre's Day.
Frige-Daeg	—	Friga's Day.
Seternes-Day	—	Seterne's Daeg.

The appellations of two other Saxon Goddesses have been transmitted to us in the pages of Bede; namely, Rheda, who gave her name to March—Rhedmonath,—because therein they sacrificed to her; and Eoster, who in like manner, and for the same reason, gave her name to April,—Eostre-monath; from which no doubt has come our term of Easter, applied to the season of the great Paschal solemnities.

The Angles,—and it should be recollected that they exercised a powerful influence in the formation of the compound Anglo-Saxon character—had also a goddess called Ertha, or the Earth, as we learn from Tacitus.—

"The tribes in common worship the Goddess, Ertha, that is, the Mother Earth,—believing that she interposes in human affairs, and is car-borne to the people. In an island of the ocean there is an untrodden grove, wherein is a consecrated car, enveloped in a veil. This the priest alone is permitted to approach. He perceives the goddess enter the vehicle, which is drawn by cows, and follows her with much devotion. Then the days are festive, and those places rejoice which she honours with her visit and residence. They now enter into no wars, nor take up arms, but every sword is sheathed; both abroad and at home only peace is known, only peace is in estimation, till the same priest restores the goddess to the temple, satiated with mortal converse.

Then the car and the clothes, and, if you will believe it, the goddess herself, are washed in a secret lake. Slaves attend, whom the same lake immediately swallows up. Hence arises a mysterious dread, and a holy ignorance as to what that can be which is seen only by those who are about to perish."

One great object of fear with the Saxons was the evil being whom they called *Foul*, a name which occurs in their form of exorcism against the bite of serpents. Beyond this we know nothing of him, and perhaps, after all, the word, *Foul*, may not have been used as applicable to an individual, but to the foul, or evil, spirits in general.

Flinn, or Flint, and Zernebock, are also mentioned by some writers as being amongst their evil deities, whose influence was to be propitiated by prayer and sacrifice. The first is described by Verstegan as an idol, who had that name from his being set on a great flint stone. This idol was made like the image of death, and naked save only a sheet about him. In his right hand he held a torch, or, as they term it, a fire-blase. On his head a lion rested his two fore-feet, standing with the one of his hinder feet upon his left shoulder, and with the other in his hand; which to support he lifted up as high as his shoulder.

Zernebock, that is the *block*, or *malevolent* deity, seems more particularly to have been the devil of the Anglo-Saxons. He was sometimes simply termed *the Black*, or as it is translated in the Latin chronicles, *Ater*, that colour seeming to be inseparable from the popular ideas of the demon. He would indeed appear to have been the symbol of night or darkness, as *Juterbag* played the opposite part of the classical Aurora.

Siba, Seba, or Sjeba, was represented in the shape of a beautiful woman, her heir falling down below her knees, her hands behind her, and in one a golden apple, while the other held a bunch of grapes with a golden leaf.

A deity called Crodo, or Crodus, is mentioned by several writers. Albinus, in his *Novæ Saxonum Historiæ Progymnasmata*, thus describes him :—"Crodus is an old man, in the form of a reaper, standing with naked feet upon a little fish, called a perch. He was clad in a white tunic, with a linen girdle, in his left hand

a wheel, in his right a small vessel filled with water in which floated roses and every sort of garden-fruit. The picture is from the Brunswick Chronicle."

The Irmensul, or Irmensul, Hermessul, or Armessul, has found so many different interpretations, as well as modes of spelling, that it is hard to say what it precisely was. Grimm in his invaluable Deutsche Mythologie tells us that it meant the "universal column," the sustainer, namely, of all things, and closely connected with the *Ydrasil* of the Scandinavians. Albinus in his Meisnic Chronicles says it might have meant the pillar of Arminius—the leader who defeated the Romans—; or the pillar of Hermes, that is, Mercury; or the pillar supporting the poor and feeble. The Saxon Chronicle describes it as representing Mars, in the shape of an armed man, who stands in a green field up to his middle in flowers, and girded with a sword. In his right hand he has a flag on which is a rose or wild-flower; in his left a scale; on his helmet, a weathercock; on his shield a lion, above which is a scale, and below it a rose; and some add that upon his breast was a bear.

But whatever the Irminsula may have been intended to represent, it was the most celebrated idol in all Saxony, and its picture found a place in many temples. The fane of the great image was at Marsberg, or Mersberg. It stood upon a column about eleven feet high, composed of light red marble, with belts of orichalcus, the upper and lower gilt, as was the one between these and the crown,—also gilt;—so too was the upper circle incumbent upon it, with three heroic verses. The base was of a rude gravelstone; the whole being surrounded with an iron railing to keep it sacred from the multitude, or to save it from injury. The idol itself was of wood, and about it were three other figures.

The Irminsala was served both by priests and priestesses, who acquired no little dignity and influence from the votaries of so honoured a deity. The woman pretended to fortune-telling and divination. The man performed the sacrifices, and had besides considerable influence in political affairs, their sanction being held essential to success. They moreover appointed the district governors of continental Saxony, and named the judges who

annually decided whatever disputes might occur in the provinces. When the day of battle came, they took the idol down from its pillar, and carried it to the field in hopes by its presence to secure victory to their people. The conflict being over, they then immolated to it war-prisoners, and such of their own army as had proved cowards.

When Charlemagne had defeated the Saxons, he broke the idol, and demolished its temple, a pious work which occupied one part of his army for three days while the other stood by under arms to prevent its worshippers from coming to the rescue. The column was flung into a waggon, and buried near the Weser, on the spot where Corbie afterwards arose. Upon the death of Charlemagne, for some reason,—probably to prevent its falling into the hands of the idolaters,—it was transported beyond the Weser, and, the Saxons attempting to rescue their favourite, a battle took place, in which they were defeated. From this circumstance the spot received the name of Armensula. To prevent the recurrence of such attempts the pillar was thrown into the Inner, but only, as it turned out, to undergo a yet stranger vicissitude. When a church was built near Hillesheim, it was brought into it after much preliminary lustration, and set up in the choir, where it long was used to hold the lights upon the days of festival.

We have dwelt more at length upon this idol, as there seems a certainty, or at least a strong probability of its worship having continued with the Saxons who possessed themselves of Britain. The ancient name of Irmin Street would appear to have been derived from Irmensal.

The Saxons had many other deities; indeed their number is so great that the detail of them would too severely task the patience of most readers; we shall therefore mention but two more —Ochus Bocus, and Neccus. The first of these, under the corrupted names of old Bogey and Bogle still lingers in nursery tales and among our northern peasantry. We also find it, if Verelius be right, in the legerdemain of the Italian conjurors— "ochus pocus!" but they probably borrowed it from our own Hocus Pocus. Bochus is no doubt derived from the genuine Teutonic Bock, *a goat*, for without any apparent reason the goat

has often been made symbolical of evil, amongst Christians as well as Pagans. Thus we read in Matthew;

"And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

Hence we see why, in the Saturnalia of witches, the devil so often figures in the shape of a goat.

Neccus, or the *Neck*, may with some confidence be received as the original of our Nick, though his dominion was over an opposite element. He dwelt in the waters, and whenever sudden cramp seized a swimmer, in consequence of which he sank, it was believed that Neck had got hold of him. Steel however, was potent against this busy fiend, as was also iron, and therefore those, who were going to trust themselves in the water, usually carried about a small piece of either as an amulet.

Here then we shall close our account of the Saxon superstitions. The curious in such matters, who are prepared to grapple with the rough old German tongue, or with yet more barbarous Latin, will find enough to satisfy the most eager appetite in Fabricius, Meginhard, Albinus, Verelius, and other writers of the same stamp. If a more philosophical view of the subject is required, it must be sought for in Grimm's *German Mythology*, a work of immense labour and research, in which superstition is, as it were, rationalized and traced back to its primary elements.

From the avowed disbelief of several distinguished warriors in the popular religion, their open contempt of Woden and the Gods of Valhalla, it has been somewhat hastily concluded by certain historians that paganism was on the decline from the increase of knowledge, and the people therefore in some measure prepared to receive the truths of Christianity. But this is to confound both times and races; these contemners of Woden and his kindred deities were neither Saxons nor Anglo-Saxons; they were the fierce Norsemen, a kindred people, it is true, but far more wild and indomitable, the ancestors of those Normans who wrested from the Anglo-Saxons the dominion of Britain on the fatal day of Hastings. Independently of this, it should be recollected that every faith has its infidels; and if a few unbe-

lievers existing in the bosom of a church are to be taken as evidences of its decay, even Christianity itself is in danger, for has it not also its atheists? We should moreover consider that these despisers of the Pagan Gods had their full share in the popular superstitions, and had no claim to be wiser than their neighbours. If they flung aside all religion, it certainly was not from any superiority of knowledge, it might have been from the moral restraint, slight as it was, that even paganism imposed upon its votaries. Nor does it appear that the Anglo-Saxons were in any way prepared to adopt the truths of Christianity when Augustine, at the command of Pope Gregory, the Great, landed in the Isle of Thanet for the purpose of effecting their conversion. Ethelbert, who then reigned over that part of Britain, received the missionaries indeed with the courtesy of a mild and liberal prince, but with considerable doubt of their doctrines and intentions, although he had married a Christian princess of the Frankish race, and even allowed her the free exercise of her religion. So great were his suspicions that he declined meeting them any where but in the open air, lest they should employ any charms or sorceries to injure him. Nor was he convinced by their arguments, though in consideration of their having come so far to impart what they themselves believed to be truths, he assigned them a dwelling in Canterbury, the capital of his kingdom, and supplied them with the other necessaries of life. He also granted these strangers the liberty of preaching and converting the people if they were able.

In the end the labours of the missionaries prospered, and Christianity seemed to have taken a firm root in that part of the island. But Augustine died, and about eleven years afterwards Ethelbert followed him, and Eadbald on succeeding to the throne of his father drove out the ecclesiastics, and restored the ancient paganism. Laurentius, the successor of Augustine in the episcopal dignity, despairing of any farther good under such a monarch, prepared to quit the island. At this critical juncture, when it seemed to be a doubt whether paganism might not yet prevail in Britain for many ages, he was checked in his purpose by a timely dream. "No sooner had he fallen asleep,"—it is Bede who tells the story—"than the most blessed prince of the apostles appeared to him and, scourging him severely in the dead hour of night,

demanded, why he would forsake the flock which had been intrusted to him? to which of the shepherds would he commit Christ's sheep now in the midst of wolves?—'Have you,' said he, 'forgotten how for the sake of the little ones commended to me by Christ in token of his love, I endured, at the hands of pagans and enemies, chains, stripes, prisons, afflictions, and lastly death —death upon the cross,—thereafter to be crowned with Christ?'

Laurentius, the servant of Christ, being stimulated by the flagellation and the exhortations of the blessed Saint Peter repaired to the king in the morning, and stripping off his garments showed him how severely he had been chastized. Hereat Eadbald was much astonished, and asked who had dared to scourge so great a man. On learning that the bishop had for the safety of his soul endured such stripes and torture from the apostle of Christ, he became grievously alarmed, and renouncing all idolatry as well as his unlawful marriage, he embraced the faith of Christ, and being baptized ever afterwards consulted the interest of the church in all things to the utmost of his power."

From this time Christianity made rapid strides amongst the Anglo-Saxons, and produced its usual beneficial effects in softening the manners of men, and teaching them to put some restraint upon their passions. It must not, however, be supposed that the newly-converted Saxons shook off at once, or even for ages, all the superstitions of their forefathers. Many of their deities declined into evil spirits, and many of their evil spirits still continued to affright them in a Christianized disguise. Yet even with this alloy, such was the ameliorating influence of the new faith that it much softened, and in the end abolished slavery; it introduced learning; it revived and patronized the civil law; it originated chivalry, with all that high, romantic tone of feeling which forms one of its most pleasing characteristics. Even the ambition of churchmen and their incessant struggles for predominance over kings and nobles, were not without their use; they compelled both the monarch and the higher classes to court that third estate, which was gradually attaining influence and power from the rise of commerce and manufactures, and which by lending its weight to either side could in many cases turn the scale.

Convents and monasteries, during the first ages of Christianity, were numerous, men of birth and fortune often erecting them in the hope of atoning for the sins of their early days by these peace-offerings to Heaven in the decline of life. By an apparent contradiction of character, but which it is by no means difficult to understand and reconcile, the Anglo-Saxons, so fond of war, were yet often found, even before age had come upon them, abandoning the world, its strifes, and its pleasures, to immure themselves in the gloom of convents. For the women these retreats were particularly desirable, since within the monastic walls they obtained a shelter from the violence to which otherwise they were so often subjected, and secured the blessings of peace and quiet in exchange for the tumultuous pleasures they had renounced. With the Danes indeed even the cloister was not sacred; these ruthless invaders burned and plundered the convent with as much fury as they did the castle,—perhaps even with greater, their hatred of Christianity lending an additional impetus to their usual love of violence; yet, notwithstanding this sad exception, the benefit of such establishments was great and lasting.

The religious system introduced by Saint Augustine at the instance of Pope Gregory was of course the same in its forms and ceremonies as that of Rome whence he brought it and where he himself had received his education. At the same time it no doubt acquired a peculiar tinge from the previous habits and superstitions of the people, which blended with the new faith in defiance of all attempts to root them out. For the rest, Christianity, as then understood, was not based solely upon the scriptures, but in its discipline and doctrines was partly derived from tradition, and partly from the orders and decisions of former popes and councils.

The Anglo-Saxon political state may be said to have consisted for a long time of two ranks only, the middling classes going for little, and the lowest being absolutely nothing, in the social scale. These two favoured ranks were the *cyning* and the nobles, who, it must be allowed, were in general either the bravest or the wisest of the nation; for in those rude times when the rights of property were less permanently secured than with us, it was only

by the constant exercise of craft or courage that any one could for long maintain his situation. The strong were easily pushed out of their seats by the stronger, the crafty by the craftier. It was, in fact, for all ranks of society, a time of hard and incessant struggle, in which the social elements had not yet settled down into their proper places, but were tumultuously contending with each other to gain the upper-hand.

The earlier cynings were not hereditary, but elective; for, as they were little more than military leaders, it naturally followed that the bravest and wisest would be chosen to fill an office, upon which the very existence of the nation might depend. The election was in general made by the Witenagemot, although even this, apparently fundamental, rule of polity was not without its exceptions. On one occasion the city of London is expressly mentioned as having had a voice in choosing the new monarch. The apparent confusion in regard to this subject probably arises from the custom having varied at different times according to some peculiar necessity or other circumstance. Thus we see the elective system broken in upon, and the hereditary subsisting for two or three generations, but only to be again interrupted. In like manner the custom of crowning their queens was discontinued in the reign of Egbert, but not long afterwards restored. Here, however, we are at no loss for the cause of the change, and can therefore distinguish between the established custom, and a mere deviation growing out of a particular occasion. It was this. The beauty of Eadburgha, who had preceded the queen of Egbert, gave her almost unbounded influence over the king, her husband, which she abused to the worst of purposes, accusing many of the nobles and clergy of fabricated crimes, and persuading him to punish some with banishment, and others with death, for these imaginary offence. Where her arts did not avail to produce these results, she had recourse to prison, and had thus made away with many victims till at last she was discovered, and under circumstances peculiarly calculated to raise the general indignation. She had prepared a poisoned cup for a young nobleman who had some how offended her, but by a chance not explained by the historians, her husband also drank of it, and both died. The wrath of the whole nation was so fiercely kindled against her upon this double crime, that she was fain to fly the

country, and take refuge in France, where she was received by Charlemagne and sheltered in a nunnery. Adding the most consummate hypocrisy to her other crimes, she now played the character of a penitent with so much show of truth and fervour that the deceived sisterhood were induced to elect her for their abbess. But this restraint upon her real nature lasted only 'till she attained the object for which it had been assumed, and being detected in a low intrigue she was expelled from the convent with ignominy, and ended her days in want and suffering.

It is much to the credit of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers that the world owes to their wisdom the first idea of a government that should be subject to restraint and limitations—in other words, responsible—the germ in fact of a representative government. The king, according to their polity, was as much subject to the law as the people, or, to speak more correctly, as the higher portion of the people, who in the early times were alone an object of consideration. He could neither add to, nor take from, existing enactments without the consent of his great council, the type in some measure of our modern parliaments. The two, although their preponderance of power varied from time to time, yet generally served as a check upon each other. The king by his authority went far to curb the nobles in their mutual appeals to the sword in their aggressions upon their inferiors, which even with this salutary restraint too often deluged the land with the blood of its people. On the other hand, the king was effectually kept from attaining absolute power by the union of all the contending parties, the moment he attempted to exercise a vigour beyond the law and by so doing came to be considered as a common enemy.

We have only to keep these facts steadily in view, not forgetting the gradual upward progress of the lower orders to perfectly comprehend the civil fends, which for ages made civil war the natural condition of England, and a temporary state of peace the exception.

The ideas here brought forward in regard to the kingly power in early times, with its limitations, is sufficiently borne out by the *Fleta*, an old law-book written in the reign of the first Edward, one of the most successful, as well as powerful, of our ancient

monarchs. "The king," says our anonymous author, "has superiors in governing the people—namely, the law by which he is made king, and the court; that is the earls and barons, meaning by them the parliament."

It is not pretended that the Saxon was a representative form of government, such as we now understand the word, but it was a considerable step forward in the right road, its development being greatly forwarded by circumstances. Their kings had much less real power at first than they afterwards obtained. There being no written constitution, it followed, as a natural consequence that in the disputes, which were constantly arising between the nobles, who prided themselves on their equality, or between them and the free, or between the church and any party, the kings, as the only referee in the last instance, would naturally acquire more and more influence, which, subjected to the checks already mentioned, was constantly impelled forward in the right direction. This was not the case with any of the forms of government that had gone before. In avoiding tyranny of one kind, nations had invariably fallen into tyranny of another, and it was hard to say which was worst,—the tyranny of one, or pure despotism; the tyranny of a few, or an oligarchy; the tyranny of the priests, or finally the tyranny of the multitude, whether styled a democracy, or a republic. One thing, at least, is clear. None of them could ever be improved into a representative system, to which they were equally alien, whether ameliorated or hardened into extremes. The Saxon sytem, on the contrary, though falling very short of our present demands, could scarcely be advanced at all without coming nearer to that representative form of government, by which the wants and the wishes of the people are more or less directly expressed.

The Anglo-Saxon kings had many privileges attached to their office, some of an honorary, and others of a more substantial, nature. To the honorary class belongs,—that he should be especially prayed for, that his mere word should be taken without an oath, and that his *were* should be larger than the were of any subject, however high or noble. Amongst the more real advantages, attached to the rank of king, we may reckon,—and it is one of his most important privileges—his being protected from all personal danger, as far as might be, by the infliction of unusual

penalties for any violence committed within his precincts. "If any one," say the laws of Ina, "fight in the king's house, let him be liable in all his property, and be it on the king's doom whether he shall, or shall not, forfeit his life." He had moreover a large share in the mulcts inflicted for crimes or wrongs done by one man against another, possessed the lordship of the free, could mitigate fines and in certain instances remit the punishment of of death; the Jews were his property; his tribunal was the court of last appeal; he could at pleasure displace the high executive officers, the ealdermen and the gerefas. Other privileges, more or less important, but which it would be superfluous to detail, were also attached to the kingly dignity. The royal possessions, at one period enormous, were at all times considerable. They consisted of lands in demesne in every part of England, and after much had been given away by the various kings to their followers and friends, still,—as in most of these cases the reserved rents and services,—their property was fully enough to support them, according to the notions of the time, in regal splendour. The places, to which the name of royal town, or royal ville, is attached, are very numerous.

In addition to the rents and produce of these lands in demesne, the king had "the customs of the sea-ports; tolls in the markets; sales in the cities; duties and services to be paid to him in the burghs, or to be commuted for money; wites, or penalties and forfeitures, which the law attached to certain crimes and offences; heriots from his thanes; and various payments and benefits arising to him in the circumstances stated in the laws."

Great as were the rights and privileges of the Anglo-Saxon monarchs, they were accompanied by the salutary check of being well ascertained and defined; they could not be increased at the arbitrary will of the person enjoying them. In this we have an essential element of freedom that existed in no other country of Europe.

The military force, either for defence or aggression, had much in it of the nature of a militia, every five hides of land being bound to provide a soldier, to whom they paid five shillings for his two months' service, which was the period that he was understood to have enlisted for. This money did not even pass through

the royal hands, but was sent direct to the man doing military service. So long as the array remained under arms, it was completely subject to the king's controul, and the laws, that held it together, were more than sufficiently stringent, the men probably, like the highlanders of a century since, seeing no cause for abiding by their colours when they had got tired of the war, or had made booty that they wished to secure, or were called home by the harvest. Whoever neglected the summons to join his colours, without having a legal exemption, forfeited his land to the king. If the substitute of one, who had the right of staying at home,—for even he was obliged to find a substitute—neglected or refused to attend, the penalty was fifty shillings; if any one quitted the army without permission, he might be punished by forfeiture or death, the remission, as it would seem, lying with the king alone. On the other hand it was not allowed to any one to join the army without leave, a law, the necessity of which is hardly intelligible, in connection with the afore-mentioned prohibitions.

We have here unquestionably the leading principle of the feudal system, which attached the obligation of military service to the possession of land, an obligation so strict, that even monasteries were obliged to find substitutes amongst their tenants, although exempt in their own persons. And what in theory could be more equitable?—those, who possessed the land of the country, were no doubt the fittest persons to be called upon to arm in its defence.

But there was another ingredient of the same system connected with territorial possession,—namely that of homage to the superior, of whom any land was held. It is true that this supposed regulation has not, so far as we know, many evidences to vouch for its existence, yet still we have one example, so plain, so utterly incapable of perversion, that the fact would seem established. In the Historia Eliensis we read how a certain Athelstan, the head of a religious house, had taken wrongful possession of Eye, but finding he could not maintain his claims against the bishop, Æthelwold, he went to Wulstan and *did him homage*,—"fecitque sibi homagium"—and promised to sell him Eye for what sum he pleased, on condition of his protecting him against the bishop, who had accused him of sacrilege in robbing the church's property.

The naval armaments of the Anglo-Saxons next demand our attention. In winter it would seem that the ships were laid by, as indeed might have been presupposed from the imperfect knowledge of navigation in those days, when the seaman had little more to rely upon than chance and his own courage in contending with the elements. It was not until Easter, as we are told in the laws of Æthelred, that the ships were to be got ready for actual service. From the same authority we learn, that if any one injured a ship, he was to make compensation for it, and to pay the king's fine; and if any one damaged a ship so as to make it useless, he was to be mulcted in its full value, and also to pay a fine to the king, who in the Anglo-Saxon times would seem to have been rich, exactly in proportion as his subjects broke the laws.

The Witenagemot was the great council of the Anglo-Saxon nation, and would appear to have combined the elements that we now separate and divide between two councils,—the House of Lords, and the House of Commons. It consisted of ecclesiastics of the higher order; of earls, ealdermen, thegns, knights, and even of some portions of the people. This, we think, may be safely concluded from the different orders or ranks that we see mentioned in various documents. Nay, it would also appear that some of them were not even freeholders. Dugdale quotes a charter of Kenulf, king of Mercia, in which it is stated, that the king called to the consecration of the church the whole of the "optimates of Mercia, the bishops, princes, procuratores, and my relations, the kings of Kent and Essex, with all who were present, witnesses, in our synodical councils..... with all the optimates of Mercia in three synods, with unanimous advice, I gladly gave my gifts to all the archontes of Mercia and of the other provinces, in gold and silver, and in all my utensils, and in chosen steeds; that is, to each according to the dignity of his degree; and *all who had not lands* I bestowed a pound in the purest silver and in the purest gold. And to every presbyter, one marc; and to every servant of God, one shilling; and these gifts are not to be numbered, as it became our royal dignity."

Here we see it distinctly stated that the possession of land was not indispensable to the being elected a member of the Witenagemot, but there are other evidences, no less conclusive, that

none but freeholders could sit in the great assembly of the n tion. Perhaps the difference in this, as in so many other contr dictory instances, is only one of time, and the custom, whi prevailed at one period, was mitigated, or even abrogated, a another.

There are no certain indications, but there is much probabilit that the principle of the elective franchise was even then a knowledged. At the same time, if the privilege did exist, i could have extended only to a few; all the working agricultur population, all the inferior artizans, mechanics, and petty trade could have had no share in it; they belonged, like cattle, to the respective lords. Still the acknowledgement of such a principl however limited in practice, was an essential step on the road t freedom; it was a germ, that might, or might not, shoot up int a goodly tree according as it was favoured by circumstances, bu it must be clear that had not the seed been sown, the tree coul never have existed.

The satellites, that revolved about the throne, at lesser o greater distances, will next demand a brief consideration, or th picture of Anglo-Saxon society would be incomplete. Here too we shall find many of the elements that exist in our present con stitution, much changed indeed by time, and yet less so than might have been. It is curious moreover to observe how much of their peculiar feelings has come down to us unaltered. In nothing is this more distinctly visible than in the privileges attached by them to the possession of land, which they made the one indispensable thing for office or for consideration. Though many have imagined that this land-worship was introduced by the feudal laws of the Norman Conquerors, the truth is that it existed in full force long before their appearance in the island, and even the immense influx of wealth, and the consequent rising of other classes in the social scale have not diminished the general veneration for this class of property.

The highest officer in the kingdom was the *Ealdorman* or Alderman, though in rank inferior to the *Etheling*. It many respects he answered to the modern Lord Lieutenant of a county, with the office of sheriff combined in his own person, being the chief of a shire, and liable to forfeiture of his dignity if he connived at the

escape of a robber. The remission of the penalty lay in the hands of the king alone. He was also one of the Witan, presided with the bishop of his district at the *scire-gemot* or shire-meeting, as well as at the *folc-gemot* or meeting of the people, and led out the array of his shire to battle in the event of its being suddenly attacked by any domestic or foreign enemy. In addition to these high functions he possessed great civil powers in the administration of justice. In rank he was equal to a bishop, and above a thegn or thane, for it is ordained in the laws of Alfred that whoever fights before a bishop or an ealdorman shall make *boot*—that is compensation—with a hundred shillings. The equality of fine to be paid in either case marks the equality of rank, the penalty amongst the Anglo-Saxons being in all cases proportioned to the dignity of the person injured or offended.

The rank of *eorl* appears to have been very analogous to that of *ealdorman*, and though at times some slight shades of difference are perceptible, yet it is impossible to draw a fixed line of demarcation between them, and it is certain that the latter became the *eorl* of after ages. There are, however, great doubt and confusion in this matter, which with the scanty sources of information left us we have no means of clearing up. Thus we find a certain Oslac designated in the Saxon Chronicle at one time as an eorl, at another as an ealdorman; and yet more to confound us we learn from the same authority, that *eorldom* was used to express the same rank or office which on other occasions was implied by *ealdordome*. The unavoidable inference is that there was one period at least when *eorl* and *ealdorman* had the same meaning.

Heretoch, heretoga, heretoha, or *heretoh,* meant the leader of an army, in which name its duties are sufficiently explained.

The *Gerefa,* or Reeve, was inferior in rank to the ealdorman, and was appointed to his office by the executive power. From various passages in the *Saxon Chronicle,* as well as in the collection of *Anglo-Saxon Laws,* the following points may briefly be deduced in regard to him and his functions. There was in every burgh one *gerefa,* whose business it was to give judgments acording to the *dom-boc,* that is the "doom-book," or Book of Judgment,—to deliver up offenders to punishment,—to be present at the folc-gemot—to convene a *gemot* every four weeks for the

ending of law suits—to defend the abbots in their necessities—to supply those prisoners with food, who had no friends nor relations to assist them—and to take security in his shire from every one for the due maintenance of the public peace, which if he neglected, he lost his office, and forfeited one hundred and twenty shillings to the king. In addition to this, which appears to have been a general security, he had to take bail in an individual case of a very curious kind. "If," says a law of King Æthelred, "there be any man who is untrue to all the people, let the king's reeve go and bring him under *borh*"—i. e. surety,—"that he may be led to justice to those who accused him. But if he have no *borh*, let him be slain and be laid in the *ful*,"—that is in the burial ground for felons,—"and if any one stand up for him, let them both be worthy of one law."

It is not easy to say what is precisely intended by the phrase of "being untrue to all the people"; but to judge from the punishment it must mean an offender in the very worst degree—most probably a traitor to his country, a word of wide import, and which might be construed to signify a deserter to a common enemy, or a rebel to the king. To kill a man, and bury him amongst felons, men denied the decent rites of Christian sepulture, seems in any case a hard measure of justice, but the law becomes well nigh atrocious when it ordains that all, who stand up for the criminal, are to share his punishment. It is moreover in total opposition to the general character of the Anglo-Saxon law, which, as we have already seen, punished murder and rape with nothing more severe than a fine proportioned to the rank and profession of the victim.

The *Thegns*, or *thanes*, are next to be considered, and, although the subject is not without many difficulties, the following conclusions will brobably be found not very wide of the intended mark. They formed a class of nobles below the eorls and ealdormen, the rank being attainable by all, even by the lowest. The possession of land to the extent of five hides was an indispensable qualification, the Anglo-Saxons attaching a peculiar regard to that kind of property, which indeed was scarcely to be wondered at, when in most cases it had been gained by valour in the field, with them the highest of all human merits, while the wealth acquired by trade and the arts of peace was a matter of very

secondary consideration. But there were other requisites besides. The thegn must have "a church, a bell-house, a judicial at the burgh-gate, and a distinct office or station in the king's hall"; which last might be interpreted either as signifying an office in the king's household, or a seat in the witenagemot. Whoever by his industry and talents could acquire these essentials, no matter what his condition, so he was in the ranks of the freemen, became of right a freeman, and we need not go further for a proof of the almost instinctive sagacity of our Saxon forefathers in the science of government. What Rome in the plenitude of her power and republicanism could never discover, these rude warriors from the forests of Germany found for themselves with a wisdom that may be called intuition. They opened the paths of honour to all, and what greater stimulus to exertion could have been offered? Nor was their wisdom less evident in making the rank, thus obtained, personal instead of hereditary. At least, such in general it appears to be, although the laws twice speak of thegns as having been born in that rank. Perhaps there were some restrictions, of which we no longer see the traces.

These nobles were of two kinds; thegns simply so called and *king's thegns*. The former, who in time came to be designated, *a knight*, served as an attendant in the royal hall to the king's thegn, and accompanied him also when he followed the monarch in his military expeditions. The latter was immediately in the service of the sovereign. By Bede he is called the "king's minister"; in after times he received the appellation of baron.

The thegn was also a magistrate, and for wilful errors of judgment might forfeit his *thegn-scipe* or thaneship, as we learn from the laws of king Edgar—"And let the judge, who judges wrong to another, pay to the king one hundred and twenty shillings as *boot*, unless he dare to prove on oath that he knew it not more rightly. And let him forfeit for ever his thegn-scipe; unless he will buy it of the king, so as he is willing to allow him, and let the bishop of the shire exact the boot into the king's hands."

We now come to that which must be the termination of all human history—the grave of the Anglo-Saxons, and its attendant customs.

As it was at one period the custom of the northern nations to burn their dead, it is most probable that the ancient Saxons, a branch of the same great family, had in early days the same habit. We do not, however, find the actual practice of it by the Anglo-Saxons in any part of their recorded history.

Their coffins were made either of wood or stone, the latter material, as the most costly, being used only by kings, and prelates, and the heads of monasteries, or by the nobles and wealthier classes. This distinction is plainly seen in the story of Etheldrid, the daughter of a king, but who in the wildness of female fanaticism chose to lead a maiden life though twice married, and afterwards became abbess of Ely, where by exceeding the usual forms of religious mortification she obtained the character of a saint and a worker of miracles. At her own desire, and to mark her more than Christian humility, she was buried in a wooden coffin; but after she had lain in the grave sixteen years, her sister, who had succeeded to her office, thought it a shame that one so high-born and holy should rest like one of the common people; she therefore caused the body to be dug up, with intent to place it in a stone-coffin, and for greater honour translate it into the church. "And when," says Bede, "the body of the blessed virgin and spouse of Christ was exhumed and brought into the light, it was found to be as fresh as if she had died the same day, and never been buried at all, as bishop Wilfrid, and many others, who knew the fact, have testified. But the physician, Cinfrid, who was present at her death as well as at her exhumation, was accustomed to relate with more minute knowledge that "in her illness she had a great swelling under her jaw which I was ordered to open that the noxious matter might escape. This being done, it seemed for two days she suffered somewhat less, so that many thought she might recover. But on the third day the pains increasing, she was snatched from the world, and exchanged all grief and death itself for perpetual health and life everlasting. When after so many years she was to be disinterred and placed beneath a pavilion, the brethren standing on one side, and the sisters on the other, with holy chaunts, the abbess with a few others went in to raise and wash the body. But lo! on a sudden we heard her exclaim, 'Glory be to the name of the Lord!'—Soon afterwards I was called in, and,

the door of the pavilion being opened, I saw the corpse of the holy virgin had been taken from the tomb, and was lying on a bed, like to one who slept. They then uncovered her face, and showed me the cicatrice of the incision I had formerly made, and how wonderfully the wound had healed so as only to present the thinnest scar, instead of being wide and open. All the linen too in which the body had been buried, appeared as whole and fresh as if it had only just then been wrapt about her, and moreover a marvellous virtue was soon found to attach to the clothes as well as to the coffin. The first had a power of expelling devils from persons possessed, and of curing certain distempers; of the latter it was said that some, who had diseased eyes, were immediately relieved by praying with their heads placed against it. These miraculous gifts were generally supposed to be signs of heavenly favour for her having remained a virgin although twice married, and each time to a king."

Miracles also attended the search for stone to make her new coffin. As the country of Ely supplied no stone of size sufficient for the purpose, the abbess ordered some of the brethren to go abroad and seek for the requisite materials, whereupon they set sail,—Ely at that time was completely surrounded with water and marshes,—and voyaged till they came to a small, desolate town, called Grantecester. Here by a chance, which they set down for a special interference of providence in their behalf, they found at no great distance from the walls a white marble coffin beautifully wrought, with a lid of the same substance and ornamented in the same manner. Having thus achieved the object of their journey they returned to the Abbess, when by a second miracle the coffin was found to exactly fit the body of Etheldrid, the cavity even for the head being exactly of her size.

While the Anglo-Saxon kings were buried in linen, the clergy as a mark of distinction were committed to the tomb in their sacerdotal vestments. In some instances, when religion assumed its most gloomy form, men provided their own coffins in anticipation of death. Thus king Sebbi, having received the sacerdotal habit, and being warned in a vision of the time when he was to die, caused his coffin to be made for him beforehand. But by some mistake it proved too short for him, and, what was yet more strange, enlarge it as they would, it was still unable to contain

the body. Suddenly, however the stone extended itself, and to such a degree that it would now admit of a pillow being inserted under the head. Thus also when bishop John, a very holy man and famed for miraculous cures, went to visit a sick servant of Earl Addi, he found the man with a coffin standing ready at his bed-side, in case it should be wanted.

The place of burial, in like manner, was frequently chosen for themselves by the living. Many instances of this occur, a morbid familiarity with death and its funeral appearances, being a predominant feature in the religion of the Anglo-Saxons, the duties, no less than the pleasures of the present life, being often totally neglected and forgotten in their aspirations after a future state. Still nature would at times assert her rights, and we see friends and relatives attending about the bed of sickness with the usual sympathies, or mourning them, when dead, in all the bitterness of tears, as happened in the case of king Elfwin. When the body of the slain monarch was carried to York, all the people wept bitterly, tearing their hair and rending their garments in token of excessive sorrow.

The time that elapsed between the death of any one and his burial would seem to have been regulated in a degree by circumstances. Bede gives us an instance of a man being buried the day after his decease, but we have not sufficient grounds for believing that this was an usual custom.

There can be no doubt that in the earlier periods of Anglo-Saxon rule the bodies of the dead were interred at some distance from towns and cities. This custom, moreover, must have continued long after the introduction of Christianity, for we find Cuthbert, the eleventh Bishop from Augustine, soliciting and obtaining leave to make cemeteries within cities. An opening for this unhealthy practice having been thus made, it soon became general, and then certain restrictions were ordained, wise and wholesome in themselves, but defended by calling in the help of the grossest superstition. No enemies of the Church, nor notorious malefactors were to be buried within the holy walls, because of the horrible cries that were often uttered by them, and of the evil spirits thus let loose 'till such offenders were dug up, and cast forth from the cemetory. Many monks even were found not

sufficiently strict of life for admission here when dead, and Heaven itself would often interpose to forbid their unhallowed intrusion. So sacred was the ground within the Church-walls; that whoever brought into it a horse or falcon would be sure to suffer in his own person, or by the death of the creature he had so unholily introduced. Many instances occur in the pages of Anglo-Saxon history. In the reign of King Edgar a certain count, by name Arnulph, brought a hawk with him into the church, when the bird, dropping from his wrist, expired. At another time the cook of Abbot Hetelewin ignorantly leading his horse into the sacred cemetery, it on the sudden fell down dead. Many also lost their dogs in the same manner, and we learn besides from the "Book of Ecclesiastical Laws" that corn, hay, and other things equally unsuited to the place, were deposited in the churches. A curious picture this of the rude manners of the time, and which would almost incline us to believe the people were but half christianized, or were fast relapsing into a contempt of all religion. In this state of things may be found a reason, if not an excuse, for the monstrous fictions we have been just detailing. To have appealed to the understandings of so ignorant a race, to have told them that a church was neither a stall for horses, nor a roosting place for falcons, nor yet a granary nor a hay-loft, would have been manifestly fruitless; the wiser monks attacked them on the side of superstition, and they attained their object. It would indeed have been far better to have cultivated the minds and reformed the habits of the people, but for this they were not themselves sufficiently enlightened; having in their hands a remedy of so great power, and of such immediate efficacy, they were like some medical empirics content to get rid of a present ill, without much thought of the new, and perhaps worse, disease engendered by their specific. A less doubtful proceeding was the enactment of a law by which burial in the church-cemetery was forbidden to all who could not say their Pater-Noster and their Credo, thus placing ignorance in the same category with licentiousness and evil living.

Another important custom connected with funerals was the *Sawl-Sceat*, or Soul-Shot, a payment made to the clergy in consideration of their prayers for the weal of the soul after its separation from the body. Sometimes this gift consisted in land or

gold; at others in ornaments, in gems, in silver, very frequ in crosses of the precious metals, and even in garments and b clothes. Many gave the soul-shot in their life-time; more queathed it by will; but in any case it was considered so essen to happiness hereafter that we actually see gilds formed for t express purpose of creating a fund for such a purpose. Gr indeed was the anxiety of all classes amongst the Anglo-Sax that their bones should rest as near as possible to the altar, or the vicinity of those pious men, whose prayers had kept the e one at a distance from them in life, and whose nearness in t grave might reasonably be supposed to afford a shield against h at a time when it was most needed. Were not their bones holy did they not work miracles? Were not many of them exalted the company of saints whose intercession their religion allowed t be availing? True it is that they believed the soul quitted t body at the time of death to lie in limbo or purgatorial fires, b by that confusion of ideas, which always accompanies superst tion, they seem in these instances to have had as much care f the lifeless body as if it had still been the dwelling of the spir Yet even here we must not too hastily condemn; the error, suc as it was, proceeded from the best and kindliest feelings of o common nature, and which are still as powerful as amongst ou ignorant forefathers; we consecrate the ground in which th deserted body lies, we pile upon it costly monuments, or decorat its humble home with flowers; and Heaven forbid that it should be ever otherwise, that a cold and heart-numbing philosophy should persuade us to fling aside the earthly vesture as if it were a worn out woollen garment!

We have now accompanied the Anglo-Saxons through all the various stages of life, from the cradle to the grave, and even beyond it—to the world of his belief when the soul had passed the gates of death, and entered upon its new existence. We have seen him in the field and the cottage, in the banquet-hall and the palace, in health and sickness, in peace and war, and under every aspect he presents himself as a rude but strong-minded man, *fond* of sensual enjoyment but ever ready at the first sound of the war-trumpet to start up and unsheathe his sword, patient and persevering beyond all other people, and of a sluggish imagination, but yet which, when once excited and fairly called into action,

was capable of the highest flights. With all this, nothing could be more fortunate as regards himself and after ages than the conquest of Saxon England by William and his gallant Normans, great as were the evils it inflicted at the moment. And when was any signal or lasting good brought about in this world without some intermixture of evil, if not by its actual agency? From death cometh life, decay itself is the active servant of vitality, which springs from its dust, its ashes, and its corruption. In this case no doubt the Normans moistened the ground with blood instead of water, but the seeds, they had sown, produced a glorious harvest. These descendants of Rollo had the very qualities in which the conquered people were most deficient, a contempt for merely sensual pleasure, a more cultivated understanding, a romantic spirit that happily tempered their fierceness, and a keen apprehension of whatever contributes to the graces and elegancies of life. When time had amalgamated the two races, fused these opposing elements into one mass, the result was a people, who with no larger a domain than the small island of Britain, could bid defiance to the whole world in arms, and who soon came to equal if they did not surpass the rest of Europe in literature and science, and all that tends to elevate man above the brute creation, and to fit him for that high station which Providence has assigned him. We have only to compare the results of the Roman Conquest with those of the Norman subjugation of the island, to form a just estimate of what is owing to the latter. The Romans found a brave though uncivilized race, and they left them not more cultivated, but so stript of energy and warlike spirit as to be unable to defend themselves against the marauding Scots and Picts. The Normans, on the contrary, found the Anglo-Saxons much degenerated from the noble qualities of their ancestors, and raised them to be the conquerors of France in many a hard-fought field; they taught them to take a position amongst the nations of Europe, which they have since maintained and augmented, while their enemies for more than a century have been prophesying that they had reached their zenith, and must speedily fall to rise no more like Carthage and ancient Babylon.

XII.

TRACES OF THE

DANES IN ENGLAND

The antiquities and literature of Northern Europe have had increased attention drawn to them, of late years, from various quarters; while also greater familiarity has resulted from Travels in Norway with the customs and institutions of its primitive people,—the best remaining type of the old Scandinavian character. From these sources of information materials have been supplied for forming a very different estimate from that which has been long and generally accepted, of the civilization of the Northmen, when, during a century before and after the reign of ALFRED THE GREAT, they invaded and colonized great part of England, as well as conquered some of the fairest provinces of continental Europe. The effects, also, of this settlement of the Northmen in England on its internal polity have been hitherto very imperfectly appreciated.

According to popular ideas, which even the best of our historians have contributed to form, these northern invaders were only remarkable for their unmitigated ferocity, and an ignorance and barbarism which had scarcely any tincture of civilization. Such writers appear to have been as ill-acquainted with the antecedents of this formidable race as the Anglo-Saxon monks on whose Chronicles their accounts are based, and who describe in horrid, but doubtlessly faithful colours, the ravages of the northern pagans who overspread the land, sparing neither age, sex nor condition,—church nor convent. When at length, as we are told, the roving bands settled quietly down in the territories they had conquered, they were gradually reclaimed from their native barbarism by the superior civilization of the Anglo-Saxon people with whom eventually they fused. Finally, it is said, in the decay of the Danish supremacy, their national character was quickly lost; and their memory passed away, without leaving

any permanent traces of their influence on the character, the language, or the institutions of the English people.

It is now some years since Mr Samuel Laing took the lead in the attempt to place the claims of the Northmen to the consideration of the English student of history in a very different light; and though his hypothesis may be somewhat startling to those who pride themselves on their purely Anglo-Saxon traditions, Mr Laing's peculiar talent, his large acquaintance with the remains of the antient Saga literature, and a residence of some length in the interior of Norway, enabled him to support it with great force of argument.

In a dissertation prefixed to his historical work on the antient kings of Norway,* Mr Laing finds reason to conclude, from a review of the Icelandic Chronicles and an examination of long prevailing customs and institutions still existing in Norway, that the invaders of England in the 9th and 10th centuries "surpassed the cognate Saxon people they were plundering and subduing" (both being branches of the Teutonic race) "in literature as much as in arms;—that poetry, history, laws, social institutions and usages, many of the useful arts, and all the elements of civilization and freedom were existing among them in those ages in much greater vigour than among the Anglo-Saxons themselves:" and that, in fact, the Northmen conferred on the country they colonized, benefits at least equivalent to those which they derived themselves from their settlement in England.

More recently, an agreeable Danish writer, starting from an opposite point of view, has drawn from a careful examination of existing memorials, as well as from historical notices, of the Danes and Norwegians in England, evidence not only for vindicating their claims to the possession, from the earliest period of their settlement, of a very considerable degree of culture and civilization, irrespective of what they acquired by their new position,—but exhibiting their predominance in large and important sections of Anglo-Saxon England: a predominance not merely transient but exercising a permanent influence on the national character, habits and language, and to which M. Warsaae considers himself justified in attributing some of those cherished in-

* "The Heimskringla; or Chronicle of the kings of Norway, by Samuel Laing Esq." Longmans. 1844.

stitutions which, in common acceptance, are peculiarly esteemed to be of Anglo-Saxon origin.†

An examination of this theory, which has been so ably devoloped, both from a foreign and domestic quarter, forms a fitting branch of our present enquiries; and its progress will bring under our notice many of those interesting memorials of the Danes and Norwegians in England which have been collected from historical and antiquarian researches.

The power of the Northmen in the 9th and 10th centuries was mainly owing to their maritime superiority. But the skill required for building and fitting out numerous fleets and navigating them through the storms and currents of the northern seas argues a very considerable progress in the arts of civilization. Ferocious and sanguinary as they were, the piratical bands who in those centuries landed on the coasts of England and France must have been far in advance of the barbarous hordes which in the decline and fall of the Western empire migrated in successive swarms from the deserts of central Europe, and after long marches threw themselves on the frontier of civilized states. For such enterprises brute courage only was wanting; no preparations were necessary; the nomad tribes found subsistence in pasture and plunder as they moved onward. But in reference to the invasions of the Northmen, we are reminded how much of art and skilful workmanship were required in the frame, the cordage, the sails, the ironwork,—in provisioning, arming and equipping fleets capable of transporting large bodies of men even to the shores of England and France. It may be said that such a flotilla consisted chiefly of large boats, decked perhaps fore and aft, while the midship was open for stowage and the benches of the rowers. But even such a craft as this could not be fitted out without the resources just enumerated; while squadrons of the Northmen sometimes included vessels of large burthen and dimensions. From very early times we find them building and equipping sea-going ships. We are told that Charlemagne wept

† "An account of the Danes and Norwegians in England, Scotland and Ireland, by I. I. A. Warsaae." Murray, 1852.

when he saw a fleet of these Northern pirates on the waters of the Mediterranean; and shortly afterwards the Norwegians discovered Iceland;—a century later their colonists extended their discoveries to Greenland, and even to some parts of the coast of America.

What is more to the present purpose, it appears that the maritime expeditions of the Scandinavians were not exclusively directed to objects of plunder or conquest; but we find them from a very early period engaged in the peaceful pursuits of commerce. Annual fairs were held on the shores of the Baltic to which trading ships resorted from all parts of the Scandinavian peninsula. While the Romans occupied Britain, an active trade was carried on from the opposite coast of Jutland, which after the Saxon invasion continually increased; and we shall presently find good reason to believe that soon after the time of Alfred the Great, when the Danes and Norwegians became settled in England, the greater part of the trade of the North was in the hands of Scandinavian merchants.

It is impossible at this day to draw any accurate distinction between the Scandinavian colonies in England which were of Norwegian, and those which were of Danish origin. The former probably prevailed most in the northern districts, while the Danes occupied in great numbers the eastern coast of England contiguous to Jutland, from which the passage across the North Sea in the smallest class of vessels was easily made. From this circumstance and from the Scandinavian kings who mounted the throne of England being of Danish origin, it may perhaps have happened that the invasion of the Northmen, and all the relics and traces of it, are popularly attributed to the Danes. We are however rather inclined to think that even if the Danes preponderated in numbers, the Norwegians, the boldest and the purest race, formed the most influential element in the mixed population. They were certainly the most daring and enterprising sailors; for the coasts of Denmark are flat and without harbours its eastern shores are washed by an inclosed sea, and the voyages of the Danes were confined to the comparatively neighbouring countries of England, Holland and France. But no one can have visited the western districts of Norway—the cradle of the adventurers who

embarked on the most important expeditions, both for discovery and conquest in the early ages, and where the most genuine remains of the primitive manners and institutions are still to be found;—no such visitor, marking with intelligence the features of the country, can be at any loss to understand how a people, which tradition transports from the plains of central Asia, should in the course of time have become distinguished for their maritime enterprise.

It was not to the great extent of coast washed by the ocean that the old Northmen owed their naval preeminence, for that advantage was equally shared by other nations, who, neither then nor in later times, have turned it to so good account. Nor was their insulated position in the bleak north, far out of the great highway of nations, such as could ever render their harbours entrepots of commerce which others, possessing far less natural advantages, have become in different ages of the world. It is in the peculiar and characteristic features of the Norwegian territory that the traveller traces the causes which operated so forcibly on its early inhabitants, tempting and almost impelling them to become a sea-faring people. He finds the face of the country to consist, for the most part, of vast masses of elevated tableland totally unfitted for human habitation, affording indeed on the lower levels pasturage for cattle during the summer months, but buried in snow during the greater part of the year. The vallies between these mountain "fjelds" are generally narrow, and incapable, even under the cultivation of the present time, to provide corn enough for the sustenance of an increasing population. At the foot of these fjelds, and winding among them far into the interior, are inlets of the ocean, often expanding into broad basons and forming magnificent inland lakes. The traveller is startled at finding the blue sea, of unfathomable depth, penetrating by these channels sometimes more than a hundred miles into the bosom of the mountains. The waters of the Fjords generally wash the bases of the mountain-ranges. Primeval forests clothe the gorges of the intersecting glens, and sometimes overspread in dark masses the shelving flanks of the fjelds. Among such wild and rugged scenery, there is small space whereon the foot of man can be planted. One sees now, as was no doubt the case from the earliest times, that wherever the cliffs

recede, and a small strip of land, however narrow, interve
between the margin of the fjord,—on the steep slopes of
lower ranges, at the openings of the lateral valleys,—the hand
industry has reclaimed from the surrounding barrenness all
could be made available for the support of life.

We perceive then how the primitive population must h
been early induced and impelled to resort to the water for
which it offered in a thousand channels, and the land den
The fisheries afforded most needful supplies of food;—shut in
impassable mountains, the fjords were the only channels
interior communication, the only exit for the surplus populat
of a country in which the means of subsistence have always b
scanty; and the way by which alone supplies could be introduc
Iron-ore of the finest quality, and fuel for smelting it, abounde
and the pine-forests were at hand, from which the rude bar
could be at once launched into the water; while the peace
surface of the lakes and fjords tempted to the adventure. N
only so, but exterior to these inland seas, the whole coast
the North Cape—a distance of twelve degrees of latitude—
studded with continuous clusters of rocky islands which bre
the surges of the northern ocean, and offer a safe but intric
navigation, which in the infancy of the science was fitted
prepare the northern sailor for the bold adventure of launchi
out into the ocean itself. Even now this navigation is frequente
by the vessels engaged in the fisheries on the northern coast; an
by the way, the *jachts* in which the produce is conveyed t
Bergen—rude open boats of considerable tonnage with a sing
lofty mast and one large square-sail—are no bad types, an
probably, in a country where there has been so little change, are
models, of the inferior class of vessels which bore the followers o
the Vikings to the shores of England; while the mystic rune
which in the times of heathenism were inscribed on the poop and
on the oars, to preserve from shipwreck, are now represented by
some sacred apophthegm, pointing to the ancient tradition, and
expressive, perhaps, of aspirations the form of which only has
changed.‡

Nurtured in such a school, it is no matter of wonder that the

‡ See "Rambles among the Fjelds and Fjords of the Western districts of Norway, by Thomas Forester." Longmans, 1850.

hardy Northmen attained the maritime preeminence of which we have spoken. Navigable rivers, like their own fjords from which their innumerable flotillas shot boldly out to cross the Northern sea, opened channels easy of access to the interior of the lands they invaded; and the Humber and the Thames, the Seine and the Loire were the rendezvous of their most frequent and important expeditions. It was one of the latest achievements of king Alfred, by a skilful manœuvre, to dislodge the invaders from a fortified camp on the river Lea, into which after ascending the Thames they had drawn their ships. London was thus saved from pillage. Favoured by its unrivalled position, it had become even in the time of the Romans an important mart of commerce; and when the Northmen became settled in England, they were not slow in availing themselves of its advantages, if we may judge from the numerous memorials which yet remain of their former occupation.

It would appear that here, as in other districts which will be afterwards noticed, the new settlers established themselves at first in communities neighbouring, but not forming part of, the Saxon towns and villages,—a circumstance very likely to occur, but which, as far as we are informed, has not been hitherto noticed One of these settlements was planted on the southern shore of the Thames in the present borough of South-wark, which is said to derive its name, "Syd-virke," the southern fortification, from intrenched *works* thrown up, in the time of the Norwegian king Svend Tveskjæg, for the defence of this place of trade.* Afterwards the settlers erected a church in this burgh, which they dedicated to Saint Olave the patron saint of Norway, in whose honour churches were built in almost every place where the Northmen established themselves. The name of *Tooley Street* in the Borough, a corruption of St Olave street, marks to this day the site of a settlement, close to the river bank, so suited to a sea-faring and commercial community.

Scarcely less adapted to their purpose in those times was another settlement on the strand of the river, west of London, but beyond

* Stow mentions the battle of Southwark,—which he calls a market—in the time of Ethelred the Second. The Danes, he says, fortified it with many defences,—a deep and broad ditch, with a rampart of stone, wood, and turf. The English under Ethelred attacked them in vain. The bridge over the Thames was also protected by fortifications and breast works, but Olave assailed and forced them.

the walls, in the parish now called St Clement's Danes. St Clement was the patron saint of seamen, and there are churches dedicated to him in the old commercial towns of Norway and Denmark, as well as one, that of Eastcheap, in the city of London. The Danes and Norwegians appear to have had a distinct burial-place of their own in St Clement's Danes from the earliest times of their settlement in London and its neighbourhood. In it the corpse of Harald Harefoot, the son and successor of Canute the Great, was buried, after Hardicanute had caused it to be disinterred from its tomb in Westminster abbey and thrown into the Thames.

But the foreign merchants and mariners appear to have gradually established themselves, as their numbers and their friendly relations with the inhabitants increased, within the city walls; where three churches dedicated to St Olave, and another to St Magnus the martyr, also a Norwegian Saint, attest their piety and influence. So considerable was the Norwegio-Danish population in London, that the citizens are said in one of the Chronicles, by means of their intercourse with "the barbarians," to have almost adopted their manners and customs. It would appear that the northern merchants had their own court of judicature, the most antient civic tribunal retaining to the present day its former name of "Hustings," a word of purely northern origin;—and such was their political influence in the time of Canute the Great, that it decided the election of his successor Harold.

Not only in London, but in Derby, York, Grimsby, Whitby, and Hull, in the north and east of England, and Bristol in the west, the principal places of trade in those times, we find Danes or Norwegians established in considerable numbers. From the two latter ports especially a brisk commerce was carried on with those of Denmark and Norway and their colony in Iceland, a commerce naturally engrossed by the northern merchants settled in England, from their connections with their father-land, and also because, in its earliest stage, the naval supremacy of the Scandinavians excluded any other competitors. This commerce seems not to have been confined to the natural products of the northern regions, but to have included the far more valuable merchandize of the remote East.

We learn that from early times the Northmen maintained very intimate relations with eastern countries, and particularly with Constantinople. Their conquests in Russia and the possession of the important city of Novogorod opened to them a road, along the great rivers, to the shores of the Black sea, which, before the establishment of the trade of Venice and Genoa with the Levant and the discovery of the passage to the East Indies by sea, secured to the Northern merchants a considerable share of that commerce which has in all times enriched its successive possessors. It appears, from the oriental coins found both in Russia and in the countries surrounding the Baltic sea, to have been most active from the eighth to the eleventh centuries. We are told that "in Sweden, and particularly in the island of Gothland, such an immense quantity of these coins has been found at various times, that in Stockholm alone, above twenty thousand pieces have been preserved, presenting more than a thousand different dies, and coined in about seventy towns in the northern and eastern districts of the dominions of the Caliphs. Together with the coins, a great mass of ornaments has been dug up, consisting of rings and other articles in silver, which are distinguished by a peculiar workmanship."‖ The Northern Sagas and Arabian Annals concur in their accounts of this important commerce; in the prosecution of which, Eastern merchants are found to have visited the principal trading places in the north of Europe.

That this commercial intercourse with the East was extended to England seems also to follow from a number of Arabian coins, in conjunction with silver ornaments similar to those found in Scandinavia and Russia, having been discovered in England, particularly at Cuerdale in Lancashire, mixed with coins of Anglo-Saxon kings; of which eight hundred were those of Alfred,§ and the hoard contained a still greater number of coins of Danish-Norwegian kings and jarls. On the other hand, a prodigious number of Anglo-Saxon coins have been dug up at the principal trading places in the islands and districts on the eastern coasts of the Baltic, exhibiting the reciprocity of this commercial intercourse; for, as they are found intermixed with a still greater

‖ Warsaae's DANES AND NORWEGIANS IN ENGLAND, Sect. x, p. 103: and see an account of ornaments and coins in the soil of a drained lake in Norway, Forester's RAMBLES, p. 231.

§ See "Sketch of the Anglo-Saxon mint"; p. 134 of this vol.

number of oriental coins, and many of the English ones are of dates when the hostile inroads from the north had ceased, they can hardly be considered as having been derived from the plunder of the Anglo-Saxons. Nor is it very likely that the pirates of the ninth century brought with them the Arabian coins discovered at Cuerdale and other places in England. It is far more reasonable to consider the continual interchange of foreign coins as the fruit of that extensive commerce, the existence of which other evidence concurs in establishing.

We have been the more particular in considering the maritime superiority of the Northmen in Anglo-Saxon times, and endeavouring to account for their early distinction as a seafaring and commercial people, because in this important element of our own national greatness we are disposed to admit their claims to have essentially contributed to our subsequent preeminence. Historic truth must not be disregarded even in a work which professes to regard the administration of Alfred as the foundation of almost all that we boast in arts, in institutions, and in power. We may consider him as the first of our kings who paid any attention to naval architecture, and the founder of what may be called a national fleet; but, while the rivalry of a bold and hostile race, then masters of the sea, impelled the Anglo-Saxon king to these enlightened measures, it is to the practised skill and the spirit of enterprise introduced by the intermixture of that race, when they became settled in England, that we are probably in great measure indebted for our triumphs, both in peace and war, on that element which they were the first of the nations of the north to call their own.

Though preeminent in all that was connected with the building and navigation of ships, the Northmen had much to learn in other useful as well as ornamental arts from those among whom they came as pagans and conquerors. When the kindred tribes of the same race, the Angles, Jutes, and Saxons, first established themselves in Britain, they too were heathens, and their condition was, probably, even ruder than that of the people, who, in the decay of the Anglo-Saxon power, became for a time the predominant race in England. But when the German tribes first came over, there is reason to believe that all traces of the Roman

CALIFORNIA

civilization had not been lost in Britain; and subsequently the gradual conversion of the kingdoms of the Heptarchy to Christianity had not only produced its due effect in controlling the passions and softening the manners of a wild and sensuous population, but had engrafted them with some degree of taste for those arts, amongst others, which followed in the train of the pompous ceremonial of the Roman Church,—and which was fostered by the frequent communications maintained with the capital of Christendom.

The northern museums exhibit in their collections of antient weapons and domestic utensils a state of native art which was at least equal to that of other contemporary nations of Europe. It has been remarked, however, that it had the peculiar character of some imitation of articles of this class introduced by commerce from the East. When the Northmen settled in England, they mingled with a people who, though far relapsed, as Alfred himself lamented, into ignorance and barbarism, were in a stage of civilization superior to their own. They too speedily felt the humanizing influence of Christianity, and to the glimmerings of art which they had caught from their connection with the East was now added the fuller light derived from Western models. The fine original genius of the Scandinavian race expanded itself freely when it was transplanted to more genial climates. Every where the Northmen adapted themselves to their new position, and the terror of their arms was forgotten in their meliorating influence on society and the success with which they cultivated the arts of peace. One or two instances will suffice to exhibit the vigour and ability with which they adopted and improved upon models of artistic skill—such as it was in those times—in departments which were entirely new to them.

We have spoken of the early proficiency of the Northmen in the art of ship-building. Their dexterity probably extended to every description of work in wood. Ingenuity in carving seems to be a peculiar and natural talent with the Norwegians; for at this day it is not confined to a particular class of artisans, but the peasants in general not unfrequently work the timber frames and gables of their houses into bold and grotesque forms, and employ the long winter evenings in ornamenting their domestic utensils and articles of household furniture with delicate

carvings. Thus in the 9th and 10th centuries they carved the beaks of their long gallies, and doubtless applied the same art to domestic ornament. But in stone-work the Scandinavian people have never been expert. The primitive rocks which generally prevail in the Northern peninsula presented a material difficult to be applied to the purposes of architecture, while the primeval forests of the north, the slow growth of ages on a rocky and barren soil, furnished an abundant supply, readily obtained and easily worked, of a substance more durable than many of the öolitic strata and sand-stones, which in our own country have been employed in the erection of costly and elaborate structures.

The primitive religion of the Northmen was, for the most part, independent of "temples made with hands." Their heathenism continued for centuries after the rest of Europe had been converted to Christianity. But even when churches were required for the celebration of Christian offices, timber was the material of which they were almost exclusively constructed. There yet remain, in Norway, timber churches of vast age, of noble dimensions, and elaborate design, drawn from models of the style of ecclesiastical architecture then prevalent in other countries, which exhibit both the imitative talent of the builders and the durability of the material they employed.† Nor were feudal castles congenial to the institutions and social state of the Scandinavian people. No such architectural remains attract the traveller's attention, as they do in other countries. So that, as will be now apparent, when the Northmen migrated into the parts of Europe where the arts of civilization were more advanced, that of masonry was almost entirely unknown to them. Yet soon after they settled in Normandy they became adepts in ecclesiastical architecture, improving upon the existing models, expanding them in space and loftiness, adding the ornaments of sculpture and graceful mouldings,—their own peculiar talent,—and in fact founding a new style inseparably connected with their name.

It was not, indeed, till after the Norman conquest that this style of architecture was introduced into England, though we are not the less indebted to the genius of the Northmen for it; and in the course of a century almost every cathedral church in

† See the Frontispiece to Forester's Rambles; and Observations, pp. 174 &c.

England was rebuilt on the new model. We are unable to trace any building, of the type which prevailed in the Anglo-Saxon age, to Scandinavian architects; but as men of that race held dignified stations in the English church, and the Danish kings and Jarls erected churches and convents in England,* it may well be supposed that they sometimes employed architects and builders of northern extraction. This appears still more probable when we find men of the same race becoming, in no long space of time, preeminent in that particular branch of art, and, long before the Norman Conquest, displaying in England their aptitude for skilful occupation in other departments of industrial art.

Of the second instance we proposed to notice of the proficiency of the Northmen in England, in knowledge acquired soon after their piratical expeditions ceased; and they had settled down as peaceful occupiers, proof is given, of all others, the most incontestible. On the coins of the Anglo-Saxon kings the name of the moneyer is generally very distinctly impressed, and from the time of Edgar—less than half a century after the death of Alfred—until and during the reign of Edward the Confessor, a considerable number of these names are decidedly Danish or Norwegian. In the collection of Anglo-Saxon coins in the Museum at Stockholm alone there have been selected at least fifty, impressed with names of Danish-Norwegian coiners of the period just mentioned; and more would probably be discovered upon further enquiry;

* There is a very ancient inscription, recording the rebuilding of an Anglo-Saxon church at Kirkdale in Yorkshire. ORM, son of GAMAL, the founder was clearly a Dane or Norwegian.

ORM GAMAL
SUNA BOHTE SANCTUS
GREGORIUS MIN
STER ÐONNE HI
T IUES ÆL TODBRO
CAN AND TO FALAN AND HE
HIT LET MACAN NEIUAN FROM
GRUNDE CHRISTE AND SANCTUS GRE-
GORIUS
IN EDWARD DAGOM CYNING
IN TOSTI DAGUM EORL.

"Orm the son of Gamal bought St Gregory's Church when it was all broken down and fallen, and he caused it to be made new from the ground, to Christ and St Gregory; in the days of Edward the king, and in the days of Tosti the earl." The date of the restoration of Kirkdale church is between 1056 and 1065.

while in the two preceding centuries the names of the coiners in England were, as might be supposed, purely Anglo-Saxon. The selected coins appear to have been minted in various and most distant parts of England, shewing plainly the wide dispersion of the northern colonists among the native population. Inasmuch also as, before their invasion of England, they were unacquainted with the art of coining money, we may infer how soon, and with how much intelligence, they must have applied themselves, after their settlement, to rival the Saxons in art and to retrieve what they had neglected in this respect.—It may be therefore safely concluded that they devoted themselves with no less zeal in their adopted country to other peaceful occupations which they had already pursued in their native homes. The view which these coins afford of the early state of domestic civilization of the Northmen in England can scarcely be reconciled with the idea of their unmitigated barbarism and ferocity which is generally current.

It must not be supposed that, because the coinage of the Norwegio-Danish workmen employed in the Anglo-Saxon mints bears the stamp of their residence in various and far distant parts of the kingdom, the population of that race was by any means equally diffused in the several districts. The antient British and Roman road called the Watling Street, which crossed the country from London to Chester and the Irish channel, the course of which through the city of London still retains its original name, was established by treaty as the line of demarcation between the two races. The great strength of the Anglo-Saxons lay in the counties to the South and West of that line; on the North and East, the Northmen preponderated both in population and in power. Not that there was any part of the southern coast which the Vikings had not successively ravaged in their piratical expeditions; and they had eventually established themselves at Winchester, Chichester, Exeter, Bristol, and other places suited for purposes of trade and of communication with their mother country, as well as in many inland towns in the south of the kingdom. But the dominion of this part of England, though often severely contested, never passed from the Anglo-Saxon kings until the whole realm submitted to the sway of the Danish monarchs.

North and east of the Watling Street, matters assumed a very different aspect at an early period of the long struggle for supremacy which was thus terminated. The eastern coast of England, as it has been already observed, lay most open to the attacks of the Danes from the opposite shores of Jutland, and after the fierce bands of the Vikings had somewhat cleared the way, and they returned home with the booty they had amassed during the period of their summer forays, the shortness of the passage would naturally induce the great body of the Danes who followed their steps, with a view to conquest and settlement, to choose their landing places on the same coast. It was chiefly by the rivers, as before remarked, that their light gallies were able to penetrate for any distance into the interior of the country. The Humber and the Wash were their most favorite resorts, and the territory lying between the two rivers,—the Lindisey of the old Norsk and the modern Lincolnshire,—was the first to be permanently occupied. From thence the Danes advanced westward into the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia, or the Marches, in the centre of England, and though Alfred, then a young man, with his brother Ethelred and the West-Saxons, came to the relief of the Mercians who were under the government of their brother-in-law Burhed, the Danes eventually prevailed: Burhed fled for his life and died in a cloister at Rome, and the Danes were able to secure their conquests against all efforts to expel them. They retained possession of the strong places of Stamford, Leicester, Derby, Nottingham and Lincoln, distinguished by their size, their trade, their wealth, and the name which they obtained of the "Five Burghs." These towns, united for the common defence, contained a large Danish population. They formed, as it were, a little separate state, possessing in common their own courts of judicature and other peculiar municipal institutions, and were for a long period the central pivot of the Danish power in England. Protected by them against all attacks from the south, the Scandinavian settlers were enabled to establish themselves in the more northern districts; while their frontier on the west was secured against the inroads of the antient Britons in Wales by the occupation of the strongly fortified city of Chester.

The Northmen had possessed themselves of East-Anglia, comprising Norfolk and Suffolk, with other adjoining territories,

before the time of Alfred, who by his treaty of pacification with their king Guthrum ceded or restored to him this extensive district, and fixed for its boundaries the Wash and the Thames (below its confluence with the river Lea) and on the east the Watling Street and the Ouse. Here the followers of Guthrum appear to have permanently settled and to have formed an almost independent state, though they were held in check by their proximity to the main power of the Anglo-Saxons concentrated in the south of England.*

It was in the old Northumbrian kingdom of the Heptarchy, extending from the Humber to the borders of Scotland, and comprising all the country between the two seas, that the chief strength of the northern settlers lay, and the great bulk of the immigrant population found a home. From the time of its conquest by the sons of the sea-king Regner Lodbrog, it formed a separate state, more or less independent, under a succession of Danish or Norwegian kings and jarls who made York (Eorvik) their capital. Its inhabitants are said to have been almost exclusively of Scandinavian origin. It had a church dedicated to St Olave, as well as Lincoln, Derby, Chester, and many other towns in various parts of England. No less than twenty of the streets in York have names which appear to be derived from the old Scandinavian "gata," a street. One in particular, Goodramgate, seems connected with Gudrum the deputy of Inguar and Ubba, sons of Lodbrog, who is said to have resided at Bedern palace on the site of which Goodramgate was built.

Of the extent to which the northern and midland districts of England were colonized by people of Scandinavian race, distinct traces may be discovered in the number of places which retain names of Danish or Norwegian origin. In the southern counties the terminations are chiefly Anglo-Saxon; such as *-ton, -ham, -bury, -hurst, -den, -down, -ford,* &c; but north and east of the Watling street we find a constantly increasing number of names of towns and villages ending in words of purely Danish or Norwegian

* The villages in Norfolk and Suffolk thus occupied by the Danes obtained from them names terminating in "by," a term, as we shall presently find, still more extensively distinguishing the settlements of the Danes in the northern counties. We are informed by a friend that these villages are still popularly known in the neighbourhood as "the Byes" the "Bye-district."

derivation: of these, the great majority end in "by"—Danish *byr, by;* Norwegian *bær, boo;* originally a single farm or estate. Next in number, we find *thorpe,* a collection of houses, a village; then we have *thwaite,* an isolated piece of land, *næs,* a promontory, and *ey,* or *ooe* an island; with many others, of which the purely Norwegian words 'garth' (*gaard,* a farm)—'dale,' *dahl,*—'fell,' *fjeld*—'force' (*foss,* a waterfall,)—'haugh' or 'how,' (*haugr,* a hill) predominate in the most northern and mountainous countries, hence supposed to have been chiefly colonized by the Norwegian branch of the Scandinavian people; while the *byes* and *thwaites* and *thorpes* prevail most in the districts opposite Jutland principally settled by the Danes.†

Some of these terminations were added to the antient Anglo-Saxon names of places; others were prefixed by Danish-Norwegian words descriptive of some natural feature in the locality; and a considerable number seem clearly personal and to have been derived from the first settlers or conquerors, as Rollesby, Haconby, Swainby and Thirkelsby: Grimsdale, Grimsthorpe, Swainsthorpe and Ingoldsthorpe. Some few seem to point to the old heathen deities of the northmen, whose memory is retained in such names as Thoresby, Tursdale, Baldersby, Freysthorpe and Uller (or Otter's,)-thorpe; while such names as Bishopsthorpe, Nunthorpe, Kirkby, Crossby and Crossthwaite, mark the change of the pagan immigrants to the Christian faith.

M. Warsaae has presented us with a tabular view of 1370 towns and villages in England, having names which he considers to be clearly recognisable as of Scandinavian origin, and he computes the whole number of such places as, on a very low calculation, amounting in round numbers to one thousand five hundred. He reckons, more loosely, that in about half of England the population was mostly of Danish race, while Mr Laing agrees with Sharon Turner in estimating the portion of the soil of England possessed by the Northmen at one third of the whole. In point

† The very significant circumstance of the first settlers having, in some cases, founded a sort of suburb closely connected with places which retain their Saxon names, has been pointed out to us, through a friend in the neighbourhood, in the instances of Helper-BY near Brafferton, and Upple-BY near Easingwold, in Yorkshire. It would seem as if the new colonists had neither dislodged, nor mingled with, the original inhabitants. We have already noticed similar distinct communities existing in Southwark and St Clement Danes, in the suburbs of London.

of fact, taking the "Watling street" as the established boundary between the two nations, of the thirty-nine English shires we find thirteen (including the great county of York) besides considerable parts of eight others, within the Danish pale. This calculation therefore fully confirms the statement that at least one third of the territory of England had passed under the dominion of the Northmen before the accession of their kings to the crown of all England.

From these premises and the aid to be derived from the Domesday book, it may be possible to draw some satisfactory conclusion as to the relative proportion between the Anglo-Saxon and Danish-Norwegian population at the time that important national record was made, and to form a rough estimate of the total number of the latter, augmented as it had become by the continual influx of new colonists from Denmark and Norway, and by the natural increase of the settled population.

The antient kingdom of Northumberland, including, as we before observed, all the counties north of the Humber, was not only conquered, like the Neustrian kingdom of Normandy, but colonized by the Northmen. So severe was the onset, and in that quarter resistance was so hopeless, that even in the time of Alfred the native inhabitants fled before the repeated attacks of their ferocious invaders, just as the helpless Roman-Britons had been expelled by their precursors the Saxons, and driven to seek refuge in the mountainous districts of Cumbria, Wales, and Cornwall. The whole country was a desert till the invaders appropriated the lands they had seized, and settled down to peaceful occupations, reducing the remnant of natives to the most abject servitude. Those who escaped from slavery or slaughter fell back on the southern counties, where the Anglo-Saxon power was concentrated, and the population was increased by the accession of the fugitives. Thus the Anglo-Saxon population became more dense south of the line of demarcation, the Danish-Norwegian vastly preponderated and diffused itself on the north and east. But in forming an estimate of the relative races we must not omit to take into account the numerous colonies of Scandinavian origin which had established themselves within the Saxon pale,—in London, Winchester, Bristol, Exeter, and many other places in the southern counties. Throwing these into the

scale as a set off against the more concentrated native population in that part of the island, we may perhaps approximate to something like a true estimate, if we take the relative proportion of the two races throughout the whole of England, at the time of Canute the Great, as being—in the same ratio as that of the territorial division—on an average one third of the Danish-Norwegians to two thirds of Anglo-Saxons.

The Domesday-book furnishes some data for computing the entire population of England at a time when the relative proportions of the two races could not have been much disturbed; for the followers of the Norman conqueror formed, in point of numbers, but an insignificant fraction. The Domesday-book registers 300,785 families as living in the English counties included in that survey, which, allowing five individuals to each family, gives rather more than a million and a half; and making a rateable addition for the four northern counties omitted in the Domesday-book, we find a total of two millions for the mixed population of England at that time. Of this, one third, according to our previous estimate, would be of Danish or Norwegian extraction. But if such was the merely numerical proportion between the two races,—in the class whieh constituted the pith and heart of society, it would appear that the Danish-Norwegians were at least equal to, if they did not outnumber, the Anglo-Saxons. The great majority of the native population consisted of the servile classes,—Mr Sharon Turner reckons the villains and slaves at three fourths of the whole—while the immigrants almost exclusively belonged to the class of free and independent land-holders, of which the present sturdy bonder peasantry of Norway is the type.* The Domesday-book also helps us to form some idea of the great preponderance of this important social element; for we find a vast number of these small independent land-holders registered under the names of "sochmanni" and "liberi homines" in the districts settled by the Northmen, while in the neighbouring Anglo-Saxon counties south of the Watling Street there were very few; and the reverse of this observation is applicable to the serfs. The Domesday-book also records by name a considerable number of larger proprietors of purely Scandina-

* See Laing's "Heimskringla," Prelim. Diss. c. 1, and his Journal of a Residence in Norway," passim; and "Forester's Norway," pp. 77. &c.

vian origin, who held lands not only within the Danish pale but in parts of England lying remote from the quarter in which their power and possessions were concentrated.*

The statistics of this early period cannot be very accurately gathered, but from the information afforded by the Domesday-book, and the clearly ascertained fact that so considerable a number of places still retain the names assigned to them by the original Danish or Norwegian settlers, both the wide extent in which they occupied the soil, and the large numbers they contributed to the population of England, may be sufficiently inferred. And thus it appears that the old northern blood must still run vigorously in the veins of the English people,—more purely in some districts, but mingled in all; and the posterity of the Danes and Norwegians, their nationality merged in the common names of Anglo-Saxons, and Englishmen, have swelled the stream of population that has overrun the new continent, of the shores of which their forefathers were the first to obtain some transient glimpses; and the old northern spirit of maritime enterprise and colonization, infused into the mixed race, has, perhaps more than we are commonly aware, contributed to its wide diffusion in every quarter of the globe.

After ten centuries of progressive amalgamation, it might be supposed that it is impossible to discover any distinctive features in the present population of England characteristic of the several races which have so long mingled on its soil. Yet M. Warsaae, who must be a competent judge on such a subject, asserts that in the midland, and especially in the northern, part of England, he saw every moment, particularly in the rural districts, faces exactly resembling those at home; and if he had met the same persons in Denmark or Norway it would never have entered his mind that they were foreigners. We ourselves familiarly attribute some peculiarity of bodily structure or physiognomy to the inhabitants of the districts occupied by the Danes; the shrewdness of our northern countrymen has passed into a proverb; and the dialect prevailing in a wide extent of country is very different

* Thus "John the Dane" is mentioned as having held, in the time of Edward the Confessor, an extensive manor in Somersetshire in the northern part of the rich valley washed by the Severn sea. Over against it lie the "Steep-holm and Flat-holm," which it is supposed derive their name from a Danish word signifying a small island.

from the softer provincialisms of the south and west of England, and seems to speak its foreign origin.

M. Warsaae considers that the pure English language contains both in its vocabulary and inflexions, many Scandinavian elements, and he has collected a great number of words still popularly used in the north of England which he attributes to the Danish Norwegian immigration. But a large portion of these—we should be inclined to say the largest portion—appears to be common to both the Danish and Anglo-Saxon dialects, which, as every one knows, are cognate branches of one and the same language belonging to all the Germanic tribes *: and if M. Warsaae had been familiar with English localities, he would have been aware that many of the provincialisms which he attributes exclusively to the districts settled by the Danes are equally common, and are household words, in some of the southern and western counties.

Admitting the influence which the great influx of the Danes in the 9th and 10th centuries must have had on the dialect of the northern, midland, and eastern, parts of England, we cannot forget the fact, which has escaped M. Warsaae's observation, that long anterior to that immigration, there was a difference in the Anglo-Saxon dialects prevailing in parts of England according as they were settled by the various tribes of Jutes, Angles and Saxons; and that it is an entirely gratuitous supposition to imagine that either of these dialects commenced at a later period than another. The Jutes were but a small tribe, while the Saxons extensively occupied the south of England, and the Angles spread

* Even now there is a great similarity between the English and Danish languages, so much so that an Englishman travelling in the Scandinavian kingdoms, is soon at home in the use of all familiar names and phrases. So great a number of words are common to both, that he has only to acquire the inflexion and mode of pronunciation. We were once in company for some days in a Norwegian family with a native of the Orkneys and a gentleman of lowland Scotch extraction, being ourselves of purely West-Saxon breed; and it was curious to observe that the ability of the respective strangers to comprehend and make themselves intelligible in the language of their entertainers was measured by the degrees of latitude which they severally represented. The Orkneys, it is known, were completely colonized by the Norwegians; and the Lowlands of Scotland received a large infusion of Danish or Norwegian settlers. The modern dialect of Norway scarcely differs from the Danish; a Scotchman or Yorkshire man, speaking English with a broad accent, would make his wants tolerably understood by an intelligent native; and even a Southern finds his greatest difficulty in the idiom and pronunciation, the words of the two languages being in a large proportion the same.

themselves in great numbers over East-Anglia, Northumbria and the south of Scotland. Their language was more broad and harsh than the West-Saxon, and our best philologers are disposed to trace its marked difference from the southern dialects to this earlier period. Doubtless the immigration of the Danes, who were nearly allied to the Angles, added fresh Scandinavian elements to it, and as they coalesced with the remnant of the Anglian population using a similar idiom, every thing tended to perpetuate its distinction from the dialects of the south of England.

The near relationship of the men of the north of England with the Scandinavian people is said to be reflected in popular songs, the memory of which still lingers in those districts. In the Dissertation prefixed to the Heimskringla,—which has been already referred to, Mr Laing drew particular attention to the very extensive remains of the Northern literature, exhibiting a great intellectual activity, and necessarily exercising a vast influence on the people amongst whom it was current, from a very early age. He supplies from Danish authorities a list of 169 works, in prose and verse, historical and fabulous, composed or reduced to writing from oral tradition between the 8th and 13th centuries, which form a body of national literature such as no other country in the same stage of civilization has furnished, and containing a fund of information on the history, the religion and the manners of the Scandinavian nations. What we know of the early history of every people can only be derived from traditionary stories, ballads and songs. The Antient Britons and Celts had their bards, the Saxons their minstrels, and the Normans and Provençals their troubadours and minnesingers; but the Scandinavian Scalds and Saga-writers were a more numerous class, rank higher in the historic order, and it would appear exercised a vastly superior influence on the great body of the people, for whom they more especially sung and wrote.

That the Anglo-Saxons, like all other rude nations, recited in verse their national annals, and the achievements of their heroes, there is no reason to doubt. Specimens of such songs are preserved in the Saxon Chronicle, and we have the anecdotes of Alfred's entrance, disguised as a minstrel, into the Danish camp—which, by the way, seems to convey the idea of a great similarity

dialects—and of Alfred's obtaining a reward for learning to read the ballads which before he had recited by rote. But we have the authority of Sharon Turner for remarking that the Anglo-Saxon poetry was but scanty and barren. What it was, christianized and polished by the piety and genius of Alfred, the English reader has had an opportunity of judging in one of the most interesting parts of the present volume. But in this, as in every other of his comprehensive designs, he stood alone. His great object, he tells us, was to create a popular national literature, of which there was none, and he was compelled to have recourse to foreign elements to form it. How he laboured for the diffusion of knowledge among his people by the translation of a number of foreign works into their native tongue, subsequent pages will abundantly manifest. But in the five succeeding centuries, we have, with the exception of the Saxon Chronicle, scarcely an original Anglo-Saxon or English work. The writers of the times composed in Latin, and therefore their labours were useless to the great bulk of the people.

This state of things is contrasted with the intellectual activity of the Scandinavians, which during the same period gave birth to a literature in the popular tongue which was widely diffused and intensely national. It embraced a wide field, from the mythic poetry of the elder Edda, handed down by oral tradition, to the Sagas, which pourtray with graphic truth, both in narrative and fable, the social and private life of the people, and record with historic fidelity the annals and exploits of Scandinavian kings and vikings. The life full of adventure, the lingering of a primitive and mysterious religion for centuries after the rest of Europe was Christianized, the peculiar manners and institutions of the Scandinavian nations, and their dispersion and conquests in so many foreign countries, gave full scope to the genius of the Scalds and Saga-writers, and their compositions found an echo in the hearts and feelings of a passionate and patriotic people both at home and abroad.

An island in the extreme North, on the verge of the arctic circle, was the asylum of the most intelligent spirits of the Scandinavian race, during centuries of violence, of social disorder, and intellectual torpidity among the populations of the rest of Europe. A tempestuous ocean surging sullenly on its ice-bound coast, the

long nights illuminated by the dazzling coruscations of a polar winter, and volcanic fires contending with frost and snow to invest nature with her most majestic aspects,—it was a fitting refuge for the last of the Scalds who sung of Odin and of Thor, of Rognarök the twilight of the Gods, and of Naströnd the shore of the dead. From Iceland they went forth to witness and record the achievements of their countrymen the conquerors and settlers of so many distant lands, and there, in process of time, the Eddas and Sagas, old traditions and recent annals, were committed to writing.

Scandinavian bards frequented the courts of the Danish kings and powerful jarls of that race in England. Egin Skallegrimsen, an Icelandic Scald, was with the Saxon king Athelstane at the great battle of Brunanberg, in which his brother Thorolf fell, and which afforded the old northern bards matter for enthusiastic song. The Scald remained some time at the court of Athelstane, from whom he received magnificent gifts; and another Icelandic Scald, Gunlang Ormstunge, was entertained by Ethelred the second. Many northern bards graced the court and shared the patronage of the munificent Canute, and that great king if we may judge from a single fragment, was himself inspired by the poetic ἦθος.

There still remain several fragments of poems in the Anglo-Saxon language, but possessing the spirit and character of the Icelandic minstrelsy, which serve as interesting links to connect the scanty remains of Anglo-Saxon literature with that of their Northern brethren in the family of nations. The romance of "Beowulf," the only complete Anglo-Saxon poem of any length which has come down to us,—in its present form a work probably of the tenth century and purely Anglo-Saxon in language—is claimed by Mr Sharon Turner for the Anglo-Saxon muse. It has however a close affinity with the Icelandic poetry, and the better opinion appears to be that it was originally the composition of a Scandinavian bard, and was translated and modernized in the Dano-Saxon period. With these slight exceptions, we are unable to discover any traces of the wild imaginative power, the deep impassioned feeling and the heroic grandeur of sentiment, which inspired the free genius of the Northern Muse, in their influence on such remains of Anglo-Saxon literature as have been

preserved to us. The inspiration was altogether national and inseparably linked with the sublime though wild traditions of the northern theogony, so that it ceased in a foreign soil and yielded to the influences of a purer faith.

The Christianized Danes however must have early devoted themselves to studies which prepared the way for their filling the highest offices in the Church, and their gaining weight and importance in the nation. The great abbey of Croyland in East Anglia appears to have been the principal seat of learning in those times for the foreigners settled in England. Even before the reign of Alfred, shortly after the year 800, it had a Danish abbot, Sivard, and Danish monks, Eskil and Thurstan. Several of its benefactors were of Scandinavian extraction, and the possessions they bestowed upon it bore names of Danish termination. Thorketil, another Danish abbot, rebuilt the convent after it had been sacked and burnt by the heathen pirates; and many other abbots of Danish origin governed it from the ninth to the twelfth century. Another Dane, named Thurstan, is said to have rebuilt the convent of Ely in the same neighbourhood; which it will be recollected was the district earliest peopled by Scandinavian settlers.

Somewhat later, Christianity obtained a footing among the Danes of the Northumbrian kingdom. In the year 940 it was so far established, that there is reason to think, Wulfstan (Ulfsteen ?) the Archbishop of York was of Danish extraction. At least, he espoused the cause of the Danish king Olaf against king Edmund, and it is singular that in negotiating the famous treaty which established the Watling Street as the boundary between the territories of the two kings, Odo the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was undoubtedly of foreign origin—for his father was a Dane who fought in the host of the vikings against Alfred the great—took part on the Anglo-Saxon side. Wulfstan's successor Osketil was certainly a Dane; and thus, within half a century after the time of Alfred the Great, we are presented with the singular spectacle of the two highest ecclesiastics in England, the primates of Canterbury and York, being both of Danish extraction. A great body of the inferior clergy, particularly in the

North and East of England, must likewise have been of Danish origin; and from them were naturally selected, as their names shew, the missionaries who, speaking the language of their fatherland and connected probably with Scandinavian families, went forth from England in the tenth century to convert their heathen kinsmen and countrymen to the faith of which they had imbibed the doctrines in their adopted country. The ecclesiastical influence of the Danes, thus early developed, naturally increased on the accession of Canute to the throne, and even after the fall of the Danish power, we find many high dignitaries of the Church with Scandinavian names, in various parts of England.

Whilst the Danes succeeded in advancing men of their own race to the highest seats of the Anglo-Saxon hierarchy, their leaders also took their place in the ranks of the secular aristocracy. They not only exercised almost independent power in the vast territories which they had made their own, but were advanced to high offices in the courts of the Anglo-Saxon kings, and gradually engrafted themselves by marriage on the families of the Anglo-Saxon nobility. As early as the reign of Athelstane many Danish-Norwegian chiefs were attached to the court. They were witnesses to his charters, and at the great battle of Brunanberg (Brumford in Lincolnshire ?) even fought in his army against the Northumbrian Danes, who had united their forces with the Scots and the Britons.

King Edgar, educated in East Anglia under the care of Queen Alfwena, the widow of Guthrum, was partial to the Danes, and surrounded himself with their chiefs as his most trusted followers. Ethelred II, during his contest with Svend and Canute, had Danish chiefs about him, as we find by their signatures to his charters. He married a daughter of one of them, and their son, the renowned Edmund Ironsides, in a degenerate age, exhibited talents and courage which seem to have been derived by his descent, on his mother's side, from the vigorous northern stock: while Ethelred gave his daughter Alfhilde in marriage to Ufketil, a Dane who was sheriff, or earl, in East Anglia. The increasing power of the Danish aristocracy, which had prepared the way for

the accession of Canute the Great, supplanted that of the Anglo-Saxon nobles, who during his reign lost many of the fiefs and posts of honour which were formerly in their possession; though the wise and conciliating policy of the Scandinavian king tended so far to the amalgamation of the aristocracy of the two nations, that we are told the Anglo-Saxon nobility became by imperceptible degrees more than half Danish.

Notwithstanding the restoration of the Saxon line, and the expulsion of many great Danish chiefs from his court and kingdom by Edward the Confessor, the Danes in England were reconciled to the change of dynasty by his mild administration. We find them filling the office of "Stallere," a sort of High Steward in his court; they were witnesses to his charters, and they held the government of counties even in the Saxon part of England, where Toftig was vice-comes or Sheriff. Siward the great Norwegian Earl of Northumbria interposed his power for the king's relief against the ambition of Earl Godwin. By Edward's orders he revenged the murder of his son-in-law Duncan, by the death of the usurper Macbeth, restoring Malcolm to the throne of Scotland. Edward the Confessor himself was half-brother to Hardicanute and brother-in-law of the Danish Jarl Thorkill the Tall. His queen Editha, with her brothers Svend, Harald, Gurth and Tosti—who played so remarkable a part in the history of the times,—were, on their mother's side, of Scandinavian origin; and it is a remarkable fact that the Danes had now become so entirely nationalized in England, that their chiefs, in general, made common cause against the Normans their kinsmen, whose influence favoured by Edward began to prevail in the latter part of his reign, and that they offered a more determined resistance than the native Anglo-Saxons to the progress of the Norman conqueror. Long after the southern districts of England were reduced to submission and parcelled out among his followers, the Danish chiefs and people of the north, aided by their countrymen from Denmark, fought stoutly for their independence; and it was not till he had devastated the whole country between the Humber and the Tees, and sacrificed 400,000 lives, that the conqueror reduced the hardy descendants of the Northmen to a still doubtful allegiance. His great territorial record, the Domesday book, does not include Northumberland and three

other northern counties, and we have seen how strongly the Scandinavian element prevailed in the midland and eastern districts at the time of that survey. Thus firmly rooted in the soil were the descendants of the Danish and Norwegian settlers, who, in those parts of England, almost exclusively possessed it, and thus resolutely did the people of that race struggle for the independence which they inherited from their forefathers, and for the free institutions which had been transplanted to the land they colonized.

The precise character of the Dano-Saxon laws and institutions, as to their difference from the cognate Anglo-Saxon system,—and what traces of them are still to be discovered in the frame of the English laws and constitution—are questions which admit of no very easy solution. The free institutions common in some measure to all the nations of Teutonic origin, which secured to the freemen and landed proprietors of every class an influential voice in the legislation, and assigned to them privileges and duties in the administration of justice,—these free institutions flourished with peculiar vigour in the Scandinavian countries. Physical causes to which reference has been already made,—the intersection of the great maritime branch of the Scandinaviam peninsula by fjords, lakes and mountains, the narrowness of most of the vallies, and the general infertility of the soil,—led to the distribution of the land among a class of small proprietors, cultivating their own farms and holding them by a tenure perfectly free. The nature of the country, and the exclusion of inheritance by primogeniture, prevented the accumulation of large estates and the rise of a territorial nobility who in other countries became feudal lords. Considerable power consequently devolved on these independent Udallers and Bonders. It was exercised in *Things*, or assemblies of the people which, whether provincial or metropolitan, were periodically held, both as courts of justice and national assemblies.

Such was the love of freedom and the feeling of personal independence connected with the Udal tenure, and the rights attached to it, that when Norwegian emigrants colonized Iceland in the ninth century, jealous of the assumption of absolute power by the king Harald Harfaager—like the New-Englanders who fled from

the tyranny of the Stewarts—the settlers established a republican form of government, administered by a general assembly called the *Al-thing;* as they afterwards did in their colonies in Greenland. It is not likely therefore that, when in the same century the Northmen settled in England,—the greater part of them consisting of this independent class of free-holders and urged by the same motives, indomitable love of freedom and attachment to their old institutions which were threatened at home,—the national spirit should have deserted them, and they should not have transferred as far as circumstances would admit, their primitive modes of tenure, their law-courts, their forms and customs —institutions which gratified their proud feelings and which their preponderating power guaranteed—to the new territory they occupied and the new society of which they were the founders.

What might thus have been previously inferred from the spirit and traditions of the Northmen who colonized great part of England, is placed beyond doubt by historical evidence. The *Danelag*, the district north and east of the Watling Street settled by the Danes, enjoyed its own laws and customs—the *Danes-law* from which it derived its name; and the privilege was allowed and confirmed by the charters and treaties of the Anglo-Saxon kings. We quote for its brevity a charter of Edgar's; "I will that with the Danes such good laws stand as they may best chuse, and as I have ever permitted to them, and will permit so long as life shall last me." They retained this privilege long after the Norman conquest, for in the laws of Henry I it is stated that England is divided into three parts, Wessex, Mercia, and the province of the Danes, and that the law of England follows the same division, of which the "Danelaga" or Danish law is one. Indeed so favourable was William the Conqueror to the Danish laws, because, he said, his ancestors and those of almost all his Norman barons were of Norwegian extraction, and because they were more weighty and just (profnndiores et honestiores) and prevailed more than all the other laws of the nations within his kingdom, whether Britons or Saxons, Picts, or Scots,—that he wished to introduce them throughout the realm. It was only after much importunity from his Anglo-Saxon counsellors, who implored him by the soul of his benefactor Edward the Confessor to restore the laws of that king, which originated from those

of Edgar, that William at length reluctantly gave way to their intreaties.

We have referred to this transaction, which has escaped the notice of modern writers, because while it is a remarkable attestation by a competent, though it would appear not quite an impartial judge, of the value of the Dano-Saxon laws, so far as they differed from the other laws at that time current in England, it exhibits clearly their much greater preponderance than any others. Selden, indeed, says in relating the occurrence, that "from the time of king Edgar to that of Edward the Confessor, while the power of the Danes prevailed, the Anglo-Saxon law was almost silent."* It would appear then that not only were the Norwegian or Danish laws established in the districts where their power was long predominant, but that even in other parts of England, where they formed separate communities or were mingled with the natives, they either enjoyed the privilege of following their own customs or gave a new character, and the permanent impress of foreign names to Anglo-Saxon institutions. The husting courts, *Huis-Thing*, are still preserved not only in York and Lincoln, within the Danish pale, but in London, in the Isle of Sheppey near the mouth of the Thames, and at Winchester; and "the hustings" are every where associated with the election of the members of the popular branch of the English legislature. Thus also the by-laws of our corporations derive their name from the Danish *Bi-lov*.

By an ordinance of king Ethelred's, every wapentake†—a division which is also recognized in the laws of Edward the Confessor—was to have its Gemot or Thing; and he calls the Courts of the Danish Five-Burghs "Gethingd." The Things were both deliberative and judicial assemblies. Hoveden says that in some

* "Nam a tempore Edgari regis usque ad Edwardum Confessorem, dum penes Danos summa rerum habebatur, lex Anglorum penitus obmutuit."

† This term is still used for a "hundred" in Lincolnshire and some other northern counties. It is derived from the words Wæpen, Anglo-Sax. (vaaben, wapen, Dan.) for weapon, and tacen—a sign, a token (to betoken); as tacn-bora, a standard bearer. Selden thus describes the ceremony from which it originated.—When the chief officer of the district was appointed, the leading men assembled at the usual place of meeting, and when the chief arrived, as he dismounted from his horse, they all rose to receive him. Upon which the new officer raised his spear and received the fealty of the assembly in the manner prescribed by custom. For they too raised each man his spear and touched that of the chief—and so they pledged their faith, one to the other, by the touch of arms. The clashing of spears was a custom of the antient Germans. See Selden, Glossar. in loc. Wapentake.

counties matters which could not be decided in the *Things* were carried to the county courts, and so late as the laws of Henry I the *Thungrieve* was classed with Earls, Viscounts and Vavasors. The name is preserved at the village of Thingwall in Cheshire—situated on a small tongue of land projecting between the rivers Dee and Mersey surrounded by several other villages bearing Scandinavian names—as well as at Dingwall in the north of Scotland and Tingwall in the Shetlands. But of all the Thing courts once prevailing in the old Danish part of England, in the Norwegian part of Scotland, as well as in the Orkney and Shetland islands, and which also formerly existed in Iceland, Norway and throughout the north, the Tynwald court in the isle of Man is the only one which still retains its prerogatives. It possesses according to the antient Scandinavian custom both the judicial and legislative power. Assembled once a year on the terraced hill which for a thousand years has witnessed its proceedings, the forms vividly represent the institutions of its old Norwegian founders; and "it is highly remarkable, that the last remains of the old Scandinavian *Thing*, which for the protection of public liberty was held in the open air, in the presence of the assembled people, and conducted by the people's chiefs and representatives, are to be met with not in the north itself, but in a little island far towards the west, and in the midst of the British kingdom."‡

When we come to enquire, more specifically, what particular laws or institutions were introduced by the Norwegian or Danish colonists into the Anglo-Saxon system, we find statements are made from which we are left to infer that a signal instance of the influence they exercised in modifying and improving our juridical proceedings is to be found in TRIAL BY JURY. We are far from entertaining any desire to underrate the just claims of the Dano-Norwegiau immigrants during the Anglo-Saxon period to having exercised a powerful, and in many respects a beneficial influence, on the society with which they shortly became allied and intermingled. But when pretensions are made to their having introduced into our judicial system so important an element as trial by jury,—an institution which is generally considered to be peculiarly English, if not attributed to Alfred the Great himself,

‡ "Warsaae's Danes," Part II, Sect. x

—we of the Anglo-Saxon school may well be excused if we sift the evidence adduced in favour of the theory with scrupulous care. This is not the place for the full discussion of a subject which would require large details to render it complete; but the question is not without some share of general interest, and it may perhaps be possible to render it intelligible within the limits to which its consideration must be confined.

At the outset of the enquiry it may be proper to direct the attention of those who are not familiar with the subject, to the distinction between a jury, properly so called, sworn to return their verdict to the court upon the facts of a case submitted to them, after hearing evidence on the one side and on the other,—and jurors, co-jurors, or compurgators, who according to the old laws, when a person was accused of any crime, were authorised to clear him of the charge by joining with him in a solemn denial of his guilt attested by their oaths. By this proceeding the party accused was, in the legal phrase of the times, purged * from the guilt of the charge preferred against him. Originally, these co-jurors were named by the suspected individual from among his kinsmen, or neighbours belonging to his own class in society; and their number was indefinite. But it was ultimately limited to twelve, and their nomination became vested in a public officer. They were not witnesses, nor did they in any sense execute the functions of a jury. Their testimony only amounted to this,—that in their consciences they believed the accused party to be innocent of the crime of which he was alleged to be guilty. It was something like "evidence to character" in our modern proceedings, which, as we all know, is sometimes unscrupulously given, and is always considered to be of no value when opposed to positive proof of facts. In those times, when the acquittals rested on the asseverations of kinsmen or friends of the accused, the institution was doubtless often abused; but it suited the ideas of a rude age, and societies being then small and breaches of the law generally notorious, it probably answered its purpose of securing the punishment of delinquents when the community were in their own minds satisfied that the offence had been committed. But the institution, though containing in itself the germs of "trial by jury," was founded on a very different principle.

* Ladian, to clear, vindicate, excuse, from lad, a way—of escape. Clænsian to cleanse, purity, was also a law term used. Spelman, Glossar.

In their earliest and rudest character, that of compurgators, juries may be said to have been common to the usages of all the branches of the Teutonic race,—the German tribes on the Rhine, as well as the Saxons, the Angles, and the Scandinavians. They are found in the Burgundian laws, and in those of Childebert in the kingdom of the Franks; and they may be traced through the laws of the kings of Kent and of Ina king of Wessex to an early age of English history. The trial by ordeal, and that by the duel, were afterwards successively introduced; and these three modes continued to be the legal forms of *purging* accused parties of charges preferred against them during the whole Anglo-Saxon period, including the reigns of the Danish kings.

But we are told that trial by jury, in its proper sense, was introduced into England by the Danes, having its origin in a judicial institution called "Næfn" which prevailed in the Scandinavian countries, and according to which the accuser had a right to select from among the people a certain nnmber ot jurors (Nævninger), who, after taking an oath, were to condemn or acquit the accused; and judgment was not pronounced till they had given their verdict. M. Warsaae leads us to infer that the Scandinavian jurors were not, like the Anglo-Saxons, simply compurgators, but that they judicially tried the case referred to their decision. Indeed he expressly calls them "regular jurymen," and triumphantly asserts that it must now be regarded as a point quite decided that *the earliest traces of a jury in England appear in the Danelag, among the Danes established there.** The account given us of the Scandinavian juries is extremely vague, and we find no authorities referred to. But it would require a critical examination of such early, and probably not very precise, records to enable us to ascertain whether they may be relied on to support the distinction drawn between the Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon modes of procedure, while, after all, the real question at issue is not what were the former usages of the Danes but what were those which they introduced into England.

In proof that among these was this antient Scandinavian form of jury trial, we are referred to a law of Ethelred II already mentioned, which it is readily admitted was intended only for the

* Warsaae's Danes in England, p. 164. The words quoted in Italics are printed in capital letters in the English translation.

Five Burghs and the surrounding Danish districts. Disregarding the whole spirit and tenor of the law, by a partial selection of two short passages and by bringing into juxta-position clauses which are not connected in the original documents, M. Warsaae has been able to invest his theory of trial by jury being in use among the Danes in England with a plausible air. But we incline to think that the impression made on any unprejudiced mind by a careful examination of the whole ordinance, will be unsatisfactory both as to the manner in which it has been dealt with and the conclusions which have been drawn from it.

The first clause quoted is the sequel to the one which ordains that there shall be assemblies,—"gemot," the Saxon term,—in every Wapentake. It is thus continued; "Let the XII senior thanes go out, and the reeve with them, and swear on the relic in the hand that they will accuse no innocent man, nor conceal any guilty one." Then follows, in the quotations, a clause unconnected with the preceding one, and selected from the latter part of the ordinance and having a different aspect when viewed in connection with its context. It runs thus: "Let doom stand where thanes are of one mind: if they disagree, let that stand which eight of them say: and let those who are outvoted pay each of them six half-marks."

These are the only passages cited from the law of Ethelred; and, thus brought together, and disjoined from the other clauses, they certainly appear to give a very fair representation of a real trial by jury. We have the regular number of jurors, the oath, the enquiry—of some kind—inferred from the decision between guilt and innocence, with, finally, the doom pronounced, either by unanimous agreement or by the majority. Such was our first impression. But when the last of these two clauses is restored to its proper place and those are substituted for it which really follow in the ordinance itself and from the sequel of the clause first quoted, matters assume a very different aspect. The passage in immediate juxta-position with that context is this.† "*And then*,"—when the XII thanes have performed their duty, whatever it was,—it may have been a preliminary enquiry in the nature of an inquest,—"*then* the accused shall be arrested and the grieve

† Wilkins, Leges Angl. Sac. p. 117.

shall entertain the cause," or accusation. And every accused person was to give six half-marks in pledge for his appearance to undergo the triple ordeal. If the lord of the soil was willing to be his compurgator with two good thanes, then he was only to undergo the single ordeal.—"If he be then 'fúl,' foul, guilty, let his neck be broken,—(in the case of homicide and the greater crimes). If he fled the ordeal, his bail were to be mulcted of his *gelt* or value. If he came out of it pure, his goods were to be restored.

So we find that the decision of the XII senior thanes on the guilt of an accused person was not conclusive. There could not therefore have been a trial by them in any proper sense. The arrest by the grieve, the giving bail for the culprit's appearance, and the real trial by compurgation or ordeal, the sentence, the execution,—followed in regular course. It is a mere abuse of language, which ought to have a definite meaning, to call the XII thanes of Ethelred's law "regular jurymen." For ourselves, connecting them, as we think we are entitled, with a similar appointment in a record of Alfred's which will be presently mentioned, finding that this supposed authority for a regular jury stands alone, unsupported by any other precedent, and considering that the age was not ripe for the more perfect and scientific mode of ascertaining the truth by an exact enquiry into the facts of the case,—we are rather inclined to the opinion that the XII thanes of Ethelred's law were merely compurgators, like all other jurors of the times, sworn to their belief of the guilt or innocence of the accused from convictions formed on their personal knowledge of facts, of the character of the party, or on general notoriety. If they thought him innocent, he was assoiled of the accusation, if guilty, he was subjected to the trial by ordeal, unless, as one of the clauses * seems to indicate, he was in part excused by a still stricter purgation.

The ordinance contains a variety of other provisions respecting the bail, the ordeal, fines and compurgators which it would be tedious to quote. The result of the whole appears to be that by this law of Ethelred's, in force within the Danish pale and appa-

* That which allows the simple ordeal, if the lord of the soil is willing to be compurgator of the accused with two good thanes. The clause has been already quoted in its place.

rently conceded to Danish influence, the old Anglo-Saxon modes of trial by cojurors or compurgators and the ordeal were still maintained. If there was any innovation,† any modification of the accustomed proceedings, it may possibly be found in our hypothesis that the institution of the XII thanes had the nature of a preliminary enquiry;—no doubt a most valuable safeguard against groundless accusations. But if M. Warsaae had been sufficiently informed in the details of our criminal jurisprudence, it would not have escaped his observation that the institution which he terms, "trial by jury" more nearly resembles the inquests,—of the county, the hundred, and other jurisdictions,—of our present system:—the Grand jury of the county—consisting, like the XII senior thanes of Ethelred's law, of a superior class of landed proprietors, whose duty is, as theirs may have been, to enquire and find whether there are sufficient grounds for putting an accused party on his trial; and who are sworn, in very similar language, to include no innocent person, and to screen no guilty one, in their returns;—a very different affair, as every one knows, from trial by jury, of which it is not a necessary or essential ingredient.

Ethelred's law is cited by M. Warsaae as the only record in which any certain traces of jurymen, as distinguished from cojurors, can be traced to Anglo-Saxon times; and he produces no other instance of their being recognized in the laws peculiar to the Danes in England. But there is a valuable record, also relating exclusively to a district settled by the Danes, which tallies exactly with the view we have taken of the law of Ethelred. It is generally known that after the signal defeat of Guthrum by Alfred, the Danish king and his followers were allowed to settle in East-Anglia, already partly occupied by Danish immigrants, and the government of which was ceded to Guthrum. It was a prudent concession on the part of Alfred to a powerful and still formidable enemy. The treaty entered into between Alfred and Guthrum, similar to one contracted by Ethelred II with Olaf and the Mercian Danes, is still preserved.‡ It is couched in terms of apparent equality,—"This is the treaty which Alfred king and Guthrum king, and all the Witan of England, and all the people

† The mystical number of twelve, for the jurors, was not a new ordinance, for we find it in earlier Anglo-Saxon laws.

‡ Wilkins, Leges Anglo-Sax. p. 47.

of East Anglia" (that is the Danes) "have made and fastened with oath." The first clause settles the boundaries of the Anglo-Danish territory, and the next fixes the mulct or fine to be paid for homicide at the same rate for English and Danes, with a declaration that the lives of both were equally to be cherished—(æque carum). Then follows the clause to which particular attention is called—"If any one accuses a king's thane of homicide, if he can purge himself, let him do it by XII king's thanes. If any one accuses an inferior thane, let him clear himself by XI of his equals and I king's thane."

Here we find the Danes of East Anglia, with the traditions of their native couuntry still fresh in their memories,—for the treaty of Alfred with Guthrum is a century earlier than that of Ethelred with Olaf,—powerful enough to secure to themselves wide boundaries, coextensive with the antient kingdom of East-Anglia, regarded as equals in civil rights with the native-born subjects,—and yet making no stipulation, obtaining no concession, for their enjoyment of a privilege which we are led to believe they highly prized. The language of the treaty corresponds with Ethelred's law for the Danes of Mercia and with that of the purely Anglo-Saxon laws. The accused was to purge himself of the charge by XII king's thanes or by inferior thanes, according to his rank. Purgation by oath, or by ordeal, is the essence of all. Were the usages of the Danes in Mercia different from those of the Danes in East-Anglia? We think not.

It must be remembered that, though the Danes were probably predominant, these districts contained a mixed population. The provisions of the instruments just referred to expressly recognize the fact. But they are not merely an acknowledgment of the right of the Danish colonists to be judged according to their own forms of procedure, but were equally applicable to both races of the inhabitants; and it is hardly to be supposed that the Anglo-Saxon kings, whatever they may have conceded to the traditions of the foreign settlers; would have subjected their native subjects living among the Danes to a new and much severer form of trial, to a proceeding strange to their own customs and laws; or that if they had been so satisfied of its advantages as to disregard these inconveniences, some of them at least would not have been led to introduce it into other parts of their dominions. There is nothing on

the face of Alfred's treaty, or the other Anglo-Danish records in which jurors are mentioned, to convey the idea that they were a new institution. On the contrary they are spoken of as if the system was already familiar to both the contracting parties, and only required adaptation to the circumstances of a mixed population. Nor should we readily believe that if trial by jury, in its legitimate sense, before unknown among the Anglo-Saxons, was brought under the view of Alfred the Great by his treaty with Guthrum or his other relations with the Danish settlers,—and it could hardly have escaped notice from his penetrating mind, if it was a part of their own laws which they brought with them and under which we are told they lived—he would not have perceived its immeasurable superiority to the rude and barbarous judicial customs of his own people. He who borrowed from the Danes the models of their long ships, whose range of observation extended from the extreme north to the furthest east, who gathered from every quarter the elements of civilization,—that Alfred, the great lawgiver, the severe judge, would have sanctioned the practice of a more certain and exact mode of procedure in the territory of his feudatory, while he neglected to extend the benefit to the Anglo-Saxon districts which were under his own immediate jurisdiction, if they did not already possess it.

Regard for historic truth compels us to affirm that it is a popular error to attribute the introduction of trial by jury to Alfred the Great; and we find no certain traces of its existence in earlier Anglo-Saxon times. Nor, on the other hand, can any such traces be discovered in the laws of the Dano-Saxon monarch Canute the Great, also a wise and great lawgiver, naturally favourable to the institutions of his countrymen and possessed of power to introduce them into his English dominions. It appears from his laws that trial by compurgators or the ordeal was still in vogue. It is not till after the Norman Conquest that a single clear case of trial by jury, in the modern acceptation of the phrase, is to be found in our antient records. Even then they rarely occur. The institution only began to flourish during the reign of Henry III, when it was wisely fostered with a view to discourage the trial by Duel.

Whether trial by jury was derived to us through the Normans from our common Scandinavian ancestors it is not within our

province to enquire. In the absence of historical evidence, the more philosophical view would be that its growth was gradual, with advancing intelligence, though its several stages cannot be accurately followed. The silence of the Anglo-Saxon laws generally on the subject seems to point out that in judicial proceedings jurors of some kind, possessing privileges which under the Roman laws merged in the authority of a single judge who decided both on the law and the facts,—were among the original institutions of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors, coeval with their first settlement in Britain; and that the trial of which they were, even then, an essential element was, perhaps almost imperceptibly, moulded into forms fitting the demands of advancing civilization. One important change was the substitution of a public officer in the nomination of jurors for their selection by the party accused. That was not the case with the *Nævninger*, the Scandinavian jury, but it is found in the law of Ethelred II, if it did not prevail at a much earlier age. There are at least traces of it in the laws of the kings of Kent in the seventh century in which "four legal men," or "four men legally appointed," are mentioned as jurors. Other improvements were made in progress of time. In the end, as men's minds became more enlightened, the principle of a defence, which rested the wrong-doer's exculpation on the partial or favourable convictions of his kindred and friends, appeared so faulty, that a form of procedure suited only to rude ages was radically changed. The sworn jurors remained; it was still for them to assoil or convict the accused as regarded the facts of the case, but the line was drawn between witnesses and jurymen, and the verdict came to be founded, not on the juror's own knowledge or impression of the guilt or innocence of the party accused, but on the evidence brought before them to support or rebut the charge.

Imperfect as we find the early history of trial by jury, and by whatever influences it was moulded into a perfect and well organized system, its germs were certainly planted among our Anglo-Saxon ancestors in a congenial soil; while it failed of taking root among the other German tribes who shared its first rudiments, and it found no place in the institutions of other nations however civilized. It speedily fell into decay and disappeared among the Scandinavian people for whom is challenged the glory

of having first planted it in full growth in their English colonies from whence it overspread the land.

Whatever difficulties attend enquiries into the early history of trial by jury, there seems to be no doubt that the "trial of battle" was of Scandinavian origin. The Sagas are full of stories of private feuds which were subjected to the decision of the duel in single encounter, to which either of the aggrieved parties was intitled to challenge his adversary. It was called "Holmgang," because the duel was usually fought on some small island. Such a mode of deciding controversies was well suited to the fierce spirit of the Northmen, with whom personal prowess was the first of virtues, and who exulted in a voilent death because it secured their triumphant admission to Valhalla, the paradise of warriors slain in battle.

The ancient Scandinavian duel was conducted according to certain fixed laws, and from the decision of personal animosities it was transferred to legal disputes, under more solemn forms and attended with the sanctions of justice. That the duel was introduced by the Northmen into the *Danelag* is inferred from the term "Holmgang," in its pure Scandinavian meaning, being in use in the north of England for many generations; but we are not aware of any recorded case from which it may be shewn that it was adopted as a form of trial under the Anglo-Saxon laws. With the chivalrous institutions of the Normans, and derived from the some source, it passed into the social and legal system of England. "Trial by battle" became a regular branch of English jurisprudence, and in times when courage and superstition were the leading principles of human action, it shared with "the ordeal,"—both professing to be appeals to the judgment of God—a large share of public favour, to the disparagement of the more rational procedure of trial by jury. For successive centuries wager of battle continued to be a legitimatised form of trial in our civil proceedings; and even in our own peaceful days, the ermined judges have been startled at seeing the gage of battle thrown on the floor of their court. It then became necessary to erase from the statute book the last vestige of an institution

handed down to us through our Norman ancestors from the heathenish usages of a barbarous age. The duel, which longer held its ground under the code of honour, as the sole means of redressing private wrongs which no laws are able to reach, bids fair also to disappear from among us under the influence of civilized feelings and Christian temper. It passed however, with so many better traditions of the Anglo-Danish race, to their descendants on the American continent, where, among the rude settlers in the wilderness, it has assumed, shame to say, features of bloody ferocity which not only never stained the encounters of Norman knights and English gentlemen, but would have revolted the feelings of the fierce followers of Odin in their "Holmgangs" on the green islets of the northern fjords.

Many customs of Scandinavian origin are considered to be links of the connection between the Danes in England and the native population, such as the festivities accompanying the winter festival of Christmas,—the yule logs, the holly boughs and the garnished boar's-head,—or the bonfires on the hill tops which celebrated the return of the summer solstice. But much importance cannot be attached to this view of such observances, because they were not confined to the Danish part of England but were common among the Anglo-Saxons who equally with the Northmen derived them from the antient superstitions of Odinism. We count time by nights instead of days, still reckoning a *se'night* and a *fort'night;* while at least three of the seven days of the week obtained their names from the old Scandinavian deities,—Wednesday, Woden or Odin's day; Thursday, Thor's-day, their God of thunder; the "dies Jovis" as it was of the Romans; and Friday, Frigga or Freya's day, the "dies Veneris;" while Tuesday, the third day of the week, is the Scandinavian "Tirsdag." But the material relies of the settlement of the Danes in England are by no means so numerous as their numbers and the extent of country over which they spread themselves by their incursions and colonies would lead us to expect. It appears from specimens discovered in the beds of the rivers on the east coast, and of the Thames, that their terrible swords were longer and heavier than the Anglo-Saxon blades. They are distinguished by being furnished with a guard, and by a large and frequently triangular

knob at the pommel. Their ponderous battle axes, famous in every land, from the east, where they were wielded by the Varangian body-guard of the Greek emperors, to their colonies among the Celts in Ireland, are well known; while their personal ornaments are supposed to have a character which connects them with eastern art. The vulgar in some parts of England are disposed to ascribe all such relics to the "bloody Danes," but antiquaries are unable always to distinguish them from British, Anglo-Saxon or Roman remains. The same may be said of their fortified camps. Invading the coast in numerous independent detachments inferior in numbers to the people they attacked, the Northmen skilfully threw up intrenchments on insulated heights and promontories of commanding position, or availed themselves of antient British and Roman fortifications for their protection. Some of the Danish encampments are found in the interior of the northern districts, as at Sharnbank near Harrowgate, and Gateshill camp, of large area, about 200 feet above the level of the Nid,—a river-name still found in Norway as well as in the south of Scotland settled by the Northmen. But it is in the neighbourhood of the coasts that the fortified camps of the piratical Vikings can be most clearly traced. From Flamborough head boldly projecting into the German ocean and separated from the main land by an immense rampart, still called "the Dane's dyke," to the mouths of the Humber and the Thames, along the southern coast of England and on the hills which border the eastern shore of the Bristol channel,—wherever an eastuary or a river gave access to their long gallies, or there was a sheltered strand on which they could be beached—the mouldering bank and the grassy trench still remain to connect the Chronicles of the times with the scenes of the desolation they record.

The barrows raised over the remains of the invaders can seldom be distinguished from similar remains of an earlier age, except when they are found in the neighbourhood where some great battle was fought between the Danes and Anglo-Saxons. Several such tumuli are seen near North Deighton in Yorkshire; one of them of very large dimensions. The Northmen becoming christianized, soon after their settlement in England, their rites of sepulture then accorded with their new faith, and their memorials have perished with the churches of those early times. The tombs

of Canute the Great, and his son Hardicanute, still preserved among the monuments of the Anglo-Saxon kings in Winchester cathedral, proudly tell of the former dominance of the Danish race; but we have seldom mused with greater interest on a memorial of the dead, than when decyphering the inscription on a rude stone in the antient church-yard of St John-in-castro at Lewes in Sussex, which tells that a Danish chief of royal rank rests beneath. It is carved, not inelegantly, with a double cross, the lower transom, fleuri, the upper having four quatrefoils in a circle round the angles of intersection; and it records in Latin verse that it covered the remains of a warrior of the royal race of the Danes whose name Magnus was the mark of his great descent, but who exchanged his greatness and his life of action for the peaceful guise of a poor anchorite. Who he was, neither history or legend further tell,—mystery shrouds the fate of the royal Dane.

The conclusion which may be fairly drawn from a careful investigation of Anglo-Danish or Norwegian memorials is that the results of the invasion and occupation of England by the Northmen during the Anglo-Saxon period were, as we are inclined to think, neither so barren nor so transient as is commonly supposed. Rejecting pretensions which have been advanced to an extent far beyond what there is any historical evidence to support, we fully admit the value of the foreign element which in the ninth and tenth centuries entered into the national character and institutions of the English people. It is impossible to suppose that an immigration which extended itself over such wide districts of the country, and added so largely to the native population, as we have seen it did, and that an ascendancy which prevailed, more or less, for two centuries in those kingdoms of the former Heptarchy and at length absorbed the whole, should have been without important consequences. It has been seen that they did not end with the restoration of the Saxon line, nor even with the Norman conquest.

We may not be able, after so great a lapse of time, to trace the various phases in which this extraneous influence was precisely developed: but we appear to have sufficient ground for specially attributing the predilection of the English for seafaring pursuits, their spirit of enterprise, their wide colonization and naval pre-

eminence to their early union with the most maritime people of that age. Nor can we hesitate in great measure to ascribe the love of national and personal independence, which has animated the English nation during its long struggles for popular liberty, to germs implanted by the grafting on the old stock of a rude but vigorous branch, of the same family, and from a soil on which a singular equality in the rights of property was disseminated among the whole body of the people, and where institutions flourished which admitted them to a large share in the management of public affairs, and in the enactment and administration of laws. The same feeling of resolute independence, the same ardour for self government and impatience of despotic influence still characterise the homely bonders of Norway, in whom we may even now recognise the sturdy likeness of our fathers.

It is therefore in the general impression which the free genius of the Northmen made on the national character of the people among whom they came as conquerors and colonists, that we trace the enduring benefits which flowed from an invasion attended by many barbarities and at first sight fraught only with disaster. The principles of freedom were doubtless inherent in all the races of Teutonic origin, but they maintain a more tenacious hold on the northern branch which was early separated from the parent stock. At this day, the German nations make aspirations only to constitutional government, while the descendants of the Anglo-Danes with their posterity in America—and, what is still more remarkable, the purest remnant of the Scandinavian race in Norway—enjoy the privilege of self government to the fullest practical effect. The Anglo-Saxons had inherited more, perhaps, of the spirit of freedom than any other branch of the Teutonic race, except the most northern, but at the time of the invasion of the Danes they had much degenerated. Their Gemots had become less popular than the Scandinavian *Things*, and the great mass of the people were in a state of servitude; while religion, as it was then taught, led them to depend more on supernatural intervention than upon their own exertions, prudence and valour. If they had been prepared to fight, as a nation of freemen ought and would have done, for their homes, their liberty, and their national existence, the Anglo-Saxons would have repelled the first piratical bands of the northern invaders from their shores, or not a man

would have returned to invite fresh aggressions by tidings of the wealth and weakness of the islanders.

Without admitting the entire truthfulness of the representations which have been made of the priest-ridden, slavish, and effeminate condition into which the Anglo-Saxon people had fallen when the "bloody Danes" came among them,—for there were still noble spirits in the country from the time of Alfred the Great to that of the Etheling Ironsides, and a noble stand the people made, when once roused, against the formidable force of the Northmen, so that though continually recruited, it never, or but for a short interval, was able to effect the complete subjugation of Anglo-Saxon England,—and not discovering that any positively new elements were introduced into the national institutions, we yet feel that, amid the general decay, the time was come when it required the infusion of new and vigorous blood to put fresh life into the individual, social, and political, existence of the Anglo-Saxon people. But it was renovation, a fresh stimulus, the contagion of independent organization, that were alone wanting. Had the Anglo-Saxons not partaken of the spirit inherent in all the members of the great Teutonic family, they would have been completely conquered; had their customs and institutions not been intrinsically the same as those of the tribe which was for a while predominant, they might have yielded and been changed in the presence of a polity framed in bolder lines. As it happened, in the wise dispensations of Providence, reciprocal benefits were conferred. The fierce spirit of the Northmen became tempered and humanized by their being brought into contact with a higher civilization and a purer faith, and the northern genius lent itself freely to the arts of peace; while the love of freedom of the Anglo-Saxon race was reanimated by fresh draughts from the stream which flowed direct from the fountain head, popular liberty found support in an independent class of settlers spread over the land, the industry of the native inhabitants received a new impulse from the maritime and commercial enterprise of the foreign colonists of their towns and sea-ports, and their courage was stimulated and tried by a long series of desperate conflicts with tribes whose swords were for many centuries the scourge of Europe.

The contest for supremacy between the two races, and more especially the exhaustion of Harold's force by the sanguinary

battle of Stanford bridge, prepared the way for the Norman conquest of England; while the Anglo-Danes of the northern districts were the last to submit to the Conqueror's yoke. We admit that their spirit, infused into the heart of the Anglo-Saxon people, greatly contributed to the long continued struggle for their antient liberties which animated them to resist the tyranny of our early kings, and had a most important influence in working out the English laws, institutions and character, as they at present exist. But we find no grounds for the assertion that "the Danes annihilated entirely and for ever the Anglo-Saxon power, and that as a people the latter sank entirely, and left only a part of their civilization and institutions to their successors in dominion, the Danes and Norwegians." On the contrary, every one knows that it was the laws of Edward the Confessor, originating in times before the Danish invasion, which William the Norman was prevailed on to confirm, and not the Anglo-Danish laws, for which we are told he had a strong and natural predilection. It was these laws of their old Anglo-Saxon kings which were passionately desired by the English people during the first centuries after the conquest, and the confirmation of which they wrung, as opportunity offered, from the reluctant hands of their Norman tyrants; and these were the foundation of the great charter of English liberties. What were the peculiarities of the Danish laws current in the districts they occupied we do not at all know. History, while it tells us that one third of England was for several centuries subject to these Danish laws, throws no light whatever on the particulars in which they differed from the Anglo-Saxon laws, nor on the nature of the institutions that were connected with them. They have passed away with the decline of the Danish power and left no record of their provisions, whatever may have been the indirect influence which we are willing to believe they probably had on the national character and institutions.

Whatever may have been the specific difference to which reference has just been made, the general correspondence in their laws and institutions, their common origin, and the affinity of their several dialects of the same mother tongue, formed connecting links between the two races which from the time of Alfred jointly occupied the soil of England. After the first

excesses of the invasion by the ruder race were past, these sources of union divested it of half its evil consequences, and tended to a gradual and complete fusion of the whole population into one great united nation. The antipathy of race did not long continue, as it did in France between the German Franks and the Romanized Gauls. There, as *Thierry* and other historical writers remark, the conquering race took possession of Gaul, without exterminating the conquered, but also without amalgamating with them. There were two nations—two hostile camps—on one soil. Diversity of origin, of language, of manners, and of laws, created a hostile spirit in the mingled population: and the traces of this antagonism were never, perhaps, entirely effaced,—whatever may have been the physical mixture between the two races—until the terrible revolution which sweeping away all former landmarks reduced the two distinct portions of the population to one common level. Happily for our own constitutional liberties and social advancement, no such distinctions long prevailed in England. Our Alfred wisely planted the first settled colony of the Danes, and he granted them equal rights with his native subjects. For many generations there was a contest for the ascendancy between the two races; but neither enslaved the other. Equality of rights in the eye of the law became the birth right of all who occupied the soil of England; and Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Dane, already approximated by kindred ties, became indissolubly united in contending together for the glorious privilege which was consecrated equally by the traditions of both races.

The researches through which the reader has now accompanied us, have exhibited the Danish and Norwegian invaders of England, in and about the time of Alfred the great, under a very different aspect from that which is presented from the single point of view generally taken of them, from whence they are regarded as hordes of ferocious and uncivilized barbarians, who, with the change of their religion, acquired the first elements of civilization by their connection with the Anglo-Saxons. It cannot have failed to occur to the reader that it must have been an extraordinary cultivation, bearing fruits as rapidly as those that ripen in a northern summer, which could have transformed the piratical vikings and their

followers, being such as they are represented, in the short space of half a century from the time of Alfred, into skilful moneyers, and accomplished dignitaries, filling the highest offices in the Anglo-Saxon church.

Some allowance may doubtless be made for exaggerations occasioned by the terror and alarm which visitations so tremendous must have inspired in the minds of an unwarlike and defenceless people on whom the onset of these inroads fell, and of the secluded and peaceful men by whom they are described. It is also to be observed that the Saxon Chronicle contains much fewer accounts of the pagan barbarities than later and less authentic records. Independently of this however, had the strength of the native population been prepared to stand the brunt of such attacks, and to protect the helpless, their hearths, their families and their substance from the violence of the marauders by their valour and organization, though the slaughter in battle might have been great, we should have had less fearful records of wholesale massacre, destruction and pillage. But has not war been often waged by highly civilized nations with a severity equal to that of the Northmen who devastated the coasts and the river banks of England and France? Do we suppose that the Romans were less sparing of fire and sword, when they invaded and subjugated Britain? History gives very terrible accounts of their dealings with the wretched inhabitants who were crushed by their power. It tells us also that in all ages the most polished nations have relentlessly pursued, even to extermination, the native races whose territories have become the objects of their cupidity or ambition. Even in our own times, the *razzias* of two of the most civilized nations of Europe on the frontiers of their colonies in northern and southern Africa—the indiscriminate destruction of villages, substance and crops, and the spoliation of cattle—have not been less fraught with misery and ruin to the innocent and unoffending, less calculated to inspire terror, and, excepting promiscuous slaughter of women and children, not less revolting to every feeling of humanity than the forays of the Scandinavian pirates in a ruder age.

The truth is, there is nothing incompatible in the accounts with which we are furnished of the cruelties of the piratical Danes, on the one hand, and those which describe them as living under

regular laws and institutions, addicted to commerce, and instructed in many of the useful arts of industry, on the other. We all know how among barbarous nations, the passions are roused by the excitement of war and rapine. Life—whether their own or their enemies,—is held cheap; expeditions for the purpose of plunder are held to be most honourable exploits, and they are unscrupulous as to the horrors attending them. The character of the northern tribes was unusually bold, enterprising and ruthless. They felt a stern delight in braving the storms of a tempestuous ocean, and the perils of descents on unknown and hostile shores. The foray ended, the parties engaged in it returned to their homes and peaceful occupations. They were owners and occupiers of land as well as sailors and warriors. In their maritime adventures, the same men were often alternately merchants and pirates.

The first incursions on the coast of England were probably planned and undertaken by some of the boldest and fiercest spirits of the north. Plunder was their sole object, and after a successful inroad they loaded their ships with booty, and the close of summer was the signal for their voyage homeward. The expeditions of these marauders prepared the way for other classes of adventurers. They were led by chiefs of the highest rank and included vast numbers of the free Udallers, the very pith and marrow of the population. These were not merely actuated by the love of plunder, but they fled from the encroachments of a tyrannical power unknown to their fathers to seek for freedom and independence in a foreign land. They were colonists in the proper sense of the word. They sought a country, more fertile than their own, where they might establish communities living under their own cherished laws, and practise in freedom the arts which were necessary to their subsistence; but they were prepared to carve out their new inheritance with their swords. Such, we believe, were, in large proportion, the men who in the ninth and tenth centuries invaded, conquered and settled large districts of Anglo-Saxon England—the men who founded the Norman chivalry and the Norman architecture. Ruthless as were the contests which preceded and accompanied their first regular immigration, such a class of free and independent settlers could not but eventually add to the strength and resources of the people among

whom they mingled. They brought with them not only an aptitude for civilization, but many of its elements; they have left to posterity indelible traces of their free spirit, their intelligence and their industry which it has been our business to follow. It cannot be thought, that the same men who in the century of Alfred the Great, colonized Iceland, founding there a free republic with wise laws and institutions, who thence prosecuted further important discoveries, and who made that northern isle a school from which the Scalds and Saga-writers sent forth a body of popular literature unrivalled by any nation of that or succeeding ages,—that the fellows of such men in the same century brought to England only their swords and their battle axes—brute strength and unmitigated barbarism.

XIII.

GRIMBALD'S CRYPT.

The church of St Peter's, in the city of Oxford, is one of the oldest in England, and exhibits architectural remains of different ages, of much interest to the antiquary. Beneath it is an old and venerable crypt, commonly called 'Grimbald's crypt,' supposed to have been built by Grimbald in the reign of King Alfred the Great. Dr Ingram, in his Memorials of Oxford, gives the following account of it.

The Crypt, commonly called Grimbald's Crypt, after all the controversies and criticisms to which the name of Grimbold has given birth, still continues an interesting object of curiosity to antiquaries and architects; nor

is there any reason to doubt, that it was built before the Norman Conquest. In its general style, it very much resembles the vaulted crypt of Winchester Cathedral; which is attributed to St Ethelwold; and the oldest part of Canterbury crypt, which is undoubtedly earlier than the time of Lanfranc. It contains two rows of short pillars, ranging from east to west, and two of square pilasters attached to the main walls. Each row consists of four pillars, the capitals of which are well executed, two being ornamented with some curious sculptures. The vaulting is composed of semicircular arches of hewn stone; which, according to Hearne, was brought from an old quarry, disused since Henry III d's reign, behind South Hinksey. The present entrance to the crypt is through a large buttress, which though of great age is obviously much more recent than the chancel. There are traces of two other entrances; one at the west end, and another on the north side; from the latter was a winding staircase, leading into the chancel above. Over one of the doors, which are square-headed, is a transom-stone having a semicircle carved upon it. At the east end there appears to have been an altar. The crypt is thirty-six feet long twenty feet ten inches wide, and nine feet high.

"The present crypt," adds Dr Ingram in a note "has been generally considered by those antiquaries who have paid the greatest attention to the subject to be the original one here mentioned, and coeval with the foundation of St Neot's hall, the earliest on record, which was situated on the north side of the church; and there was discoved not long since a vaulted subterraneous passage, leading into the crypt in this direction, the doorway of which still remains."

Notwithstanding the opinion of so able an antiquary as the author of the remarks just quoted, it has been held by others that the style of architecture, which presents itself in this crypt, is characteristic of an age later than that of king Alfred. The reader is referred to the passage—probably an interpolation—in Asser's Life of Alfred, given in pp. 94-96 of this volume. "The authenticity of this passage," says Dr Ingram, "has been much disputed; but it is of importance, even if considered as an early interpolation of the original work of Asser, whose death is recorded in the year 910 in the Saxon Chronicle. All the MSS. seem to be now lost. Spelman, Usher, and Stillingfleet argue against the passage: Twyne, Wood, Hearne and Wise support it. . . . It is also to be observed, that from Twyne's commentary on the passage it appears there were copies of Asser extant, containing an account of the building of St Peter's church by St Grimbald, and its consecration by the bishop of Dorchester."

CONTENTS OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

Preface—page ix

Essays illustrative of England and the English in the time of king Alfred.

1. Harmony of the Chroniclers during the life of king Alfred: A. D. 849—901—page 1
2. Sketch of the Anglo-Saxon Mint—129
3. Description of all the coins of king Alfred now remaining—137
4. A metrical English version of KING ALFRED'S POEMS, to illustrate Anglo-Saxon poetry in general—157

KING ALFRED'S PARLIAMENT at Shifford, a metrical fragment from the Anglo-Saxon, (otherwise called KING ALFRED'S PROVERBS)—249

5. History and Political state of Europe in the ninth century, the age of king Alfred the Great.—257
6. Description of king Alfred's jewel, with some observations on the art of working in gold and silver among the Anglo-Saxons—327
7. The Danes: 1. Their warlike deeds and character, —3. Their religion.—4. Their polity.—5. Their love and mode of war.—6. Their manners, customs, and occupations.—7. Their arts and language—337

Regner Lodbrog's Death-song—376

8. KING ALFRED'S CHARTERS translated from the Latin and Anglo-Saxon originals in Kemble's Codex Diplomaticus Anglo-Saxonicus—379.
9. KING ALFRED'S WILL—399
10. Tabular view of the decline and fall of the Heptarchy in the life-time of king Alfred—411
11. Domestic manners and habits of the Anglo-Saxons—413.
12. Traces of the Danes in England—493
13. Grimbald's Crypt—543

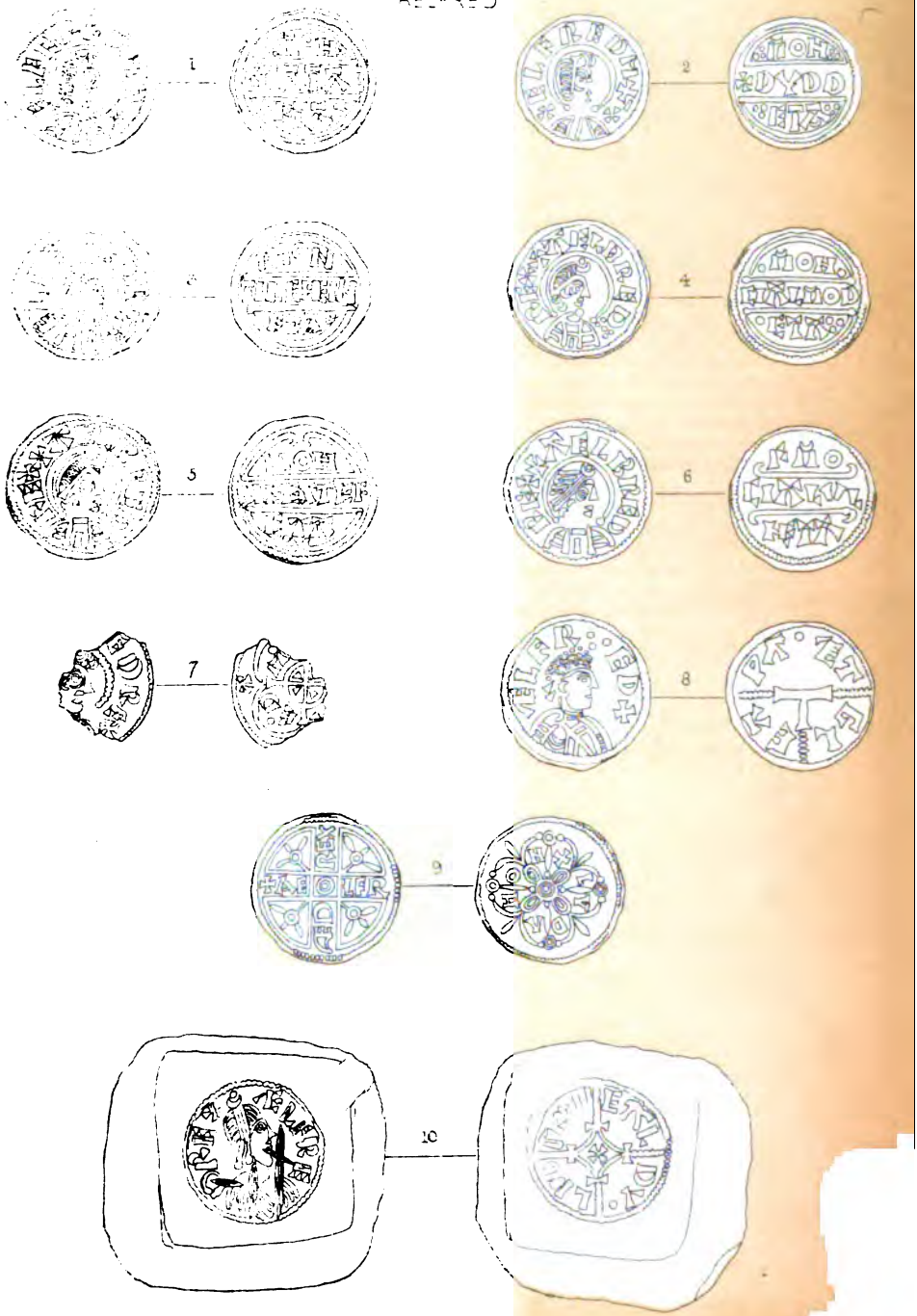
PLATES.

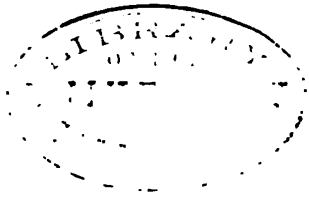
King Alfred's Jewel, to face the title.

Seven plates of coins, to face page 143.

Grimbald's Crypt, to face page 543.

KING ALFRED'S COINS, PL. I.





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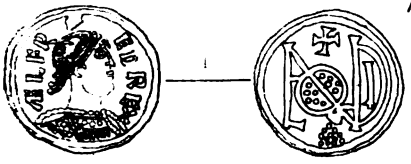
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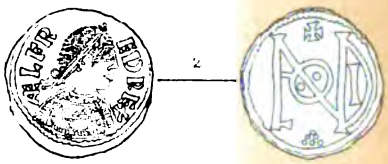
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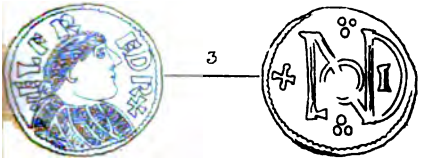
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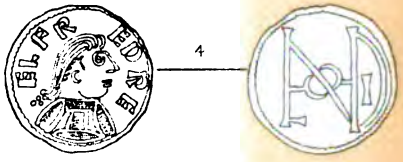
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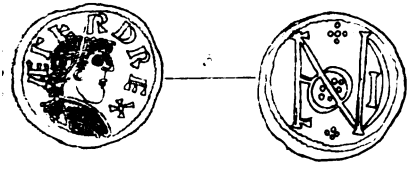
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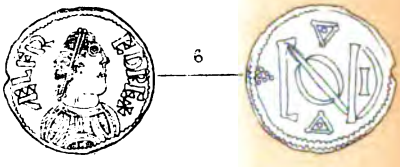
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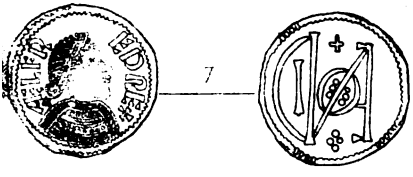
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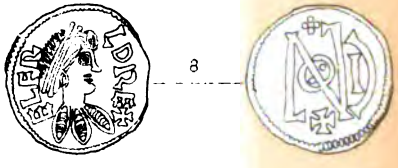
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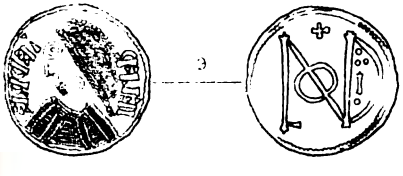
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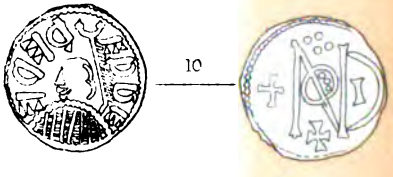
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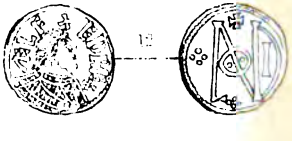
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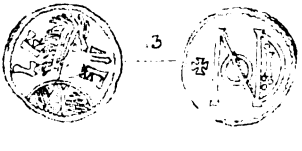
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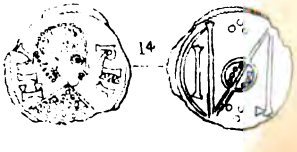
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KING ALFRED'S COINS, PL. IV.

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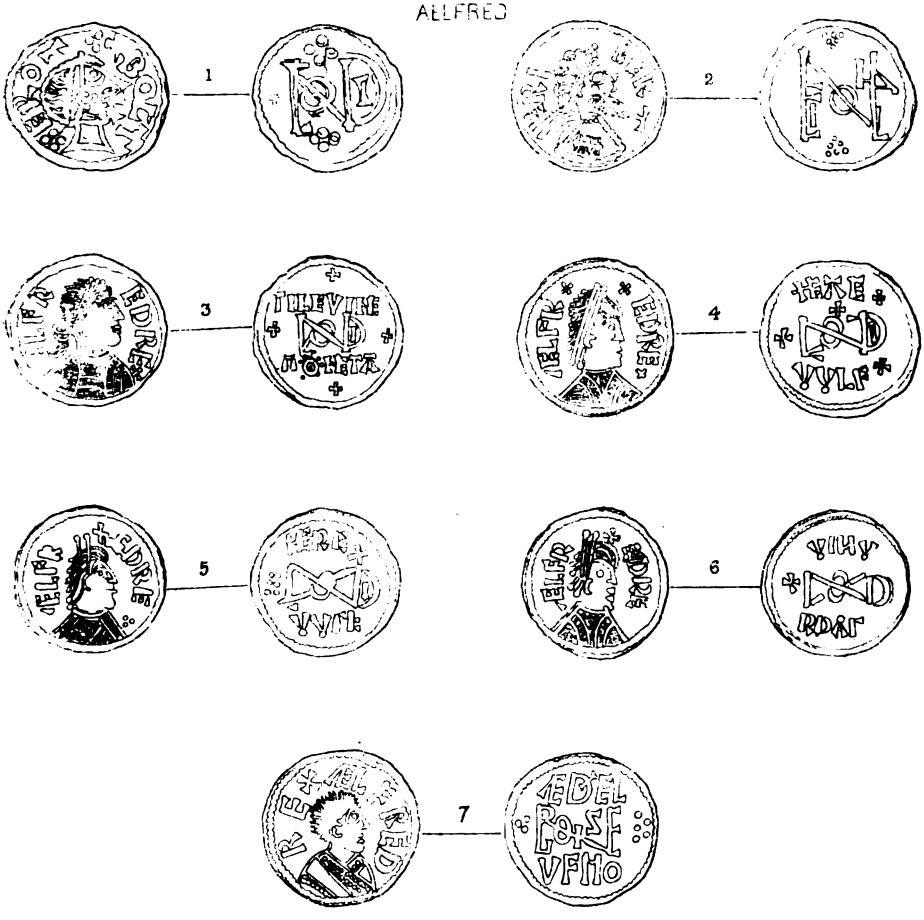

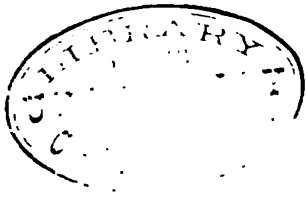

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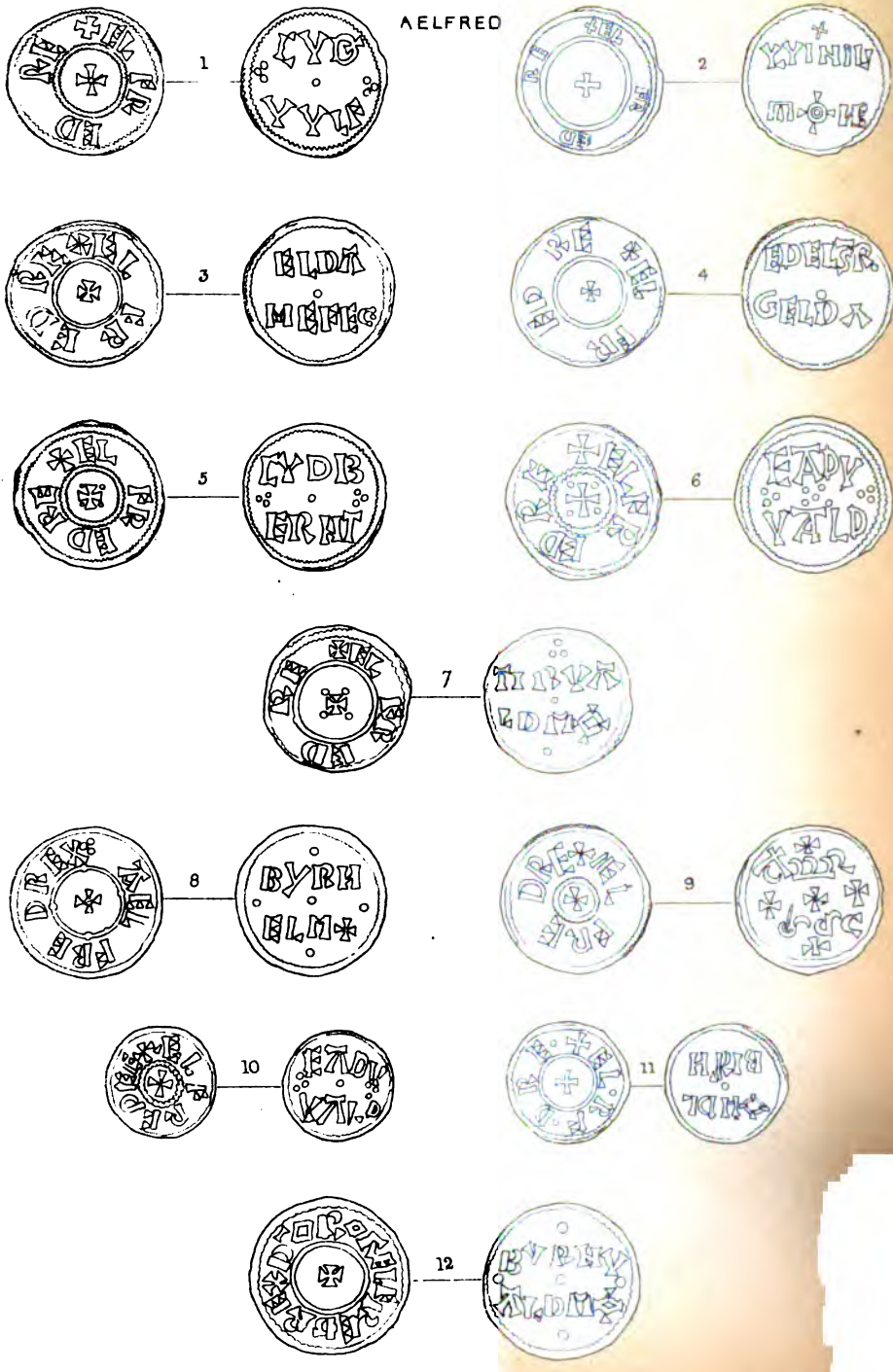

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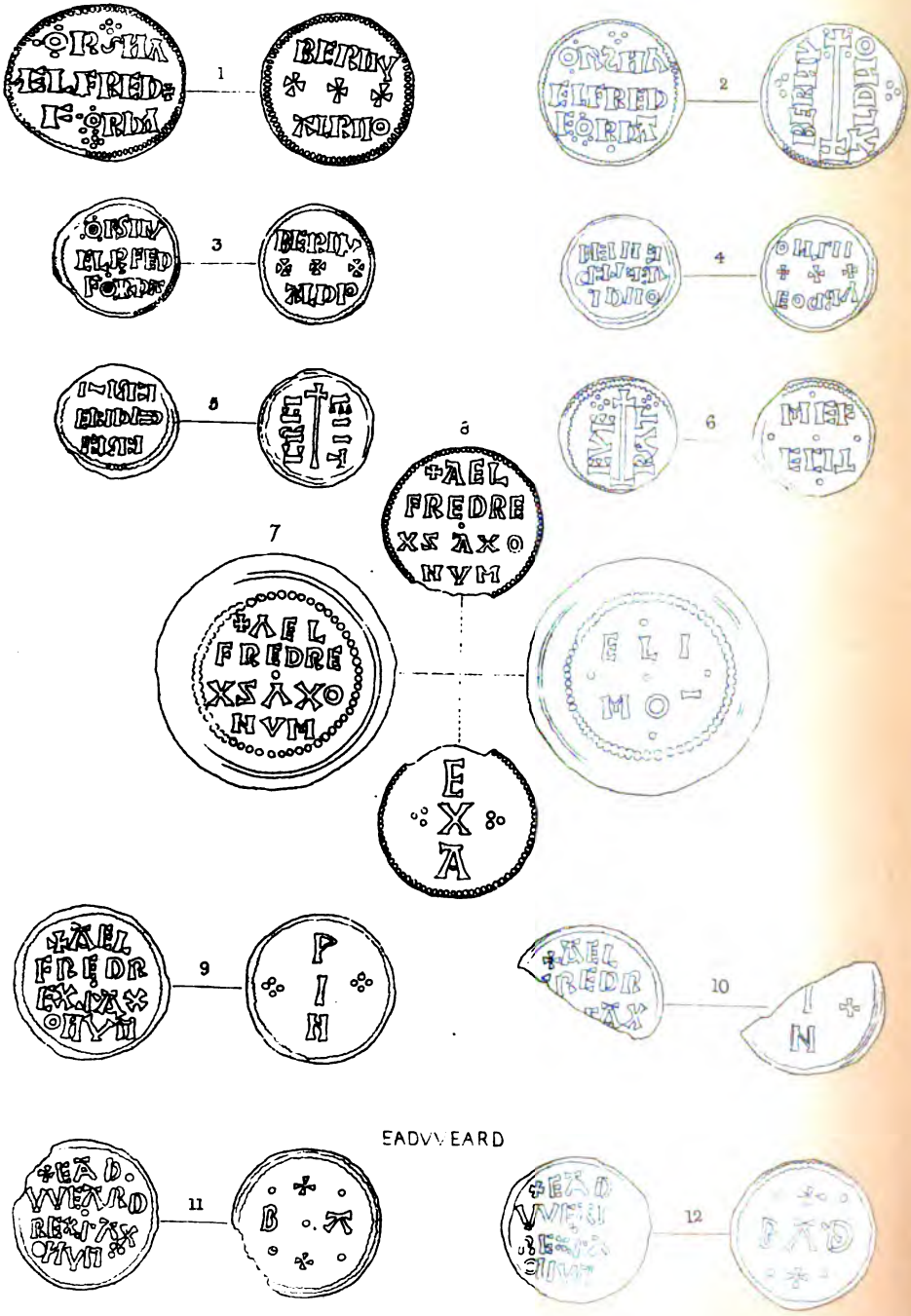

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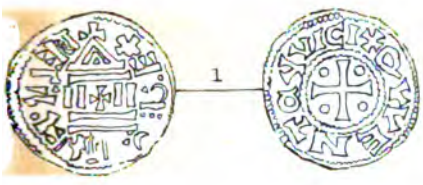

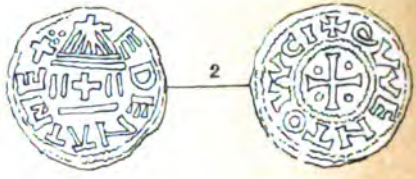

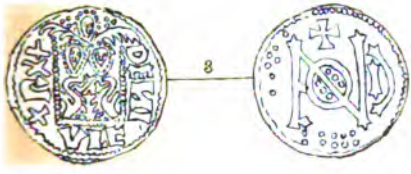

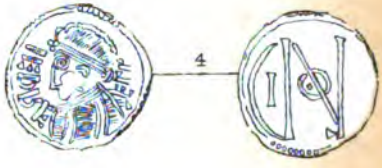

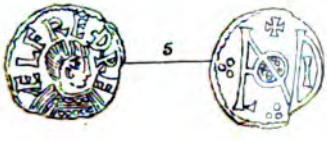

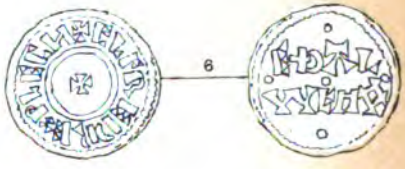

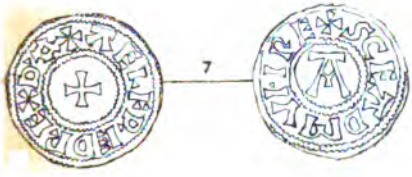

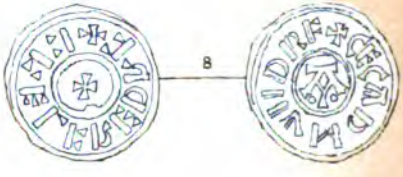

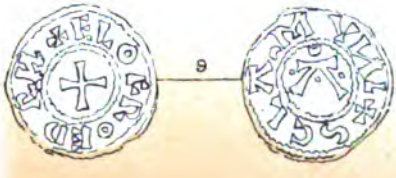

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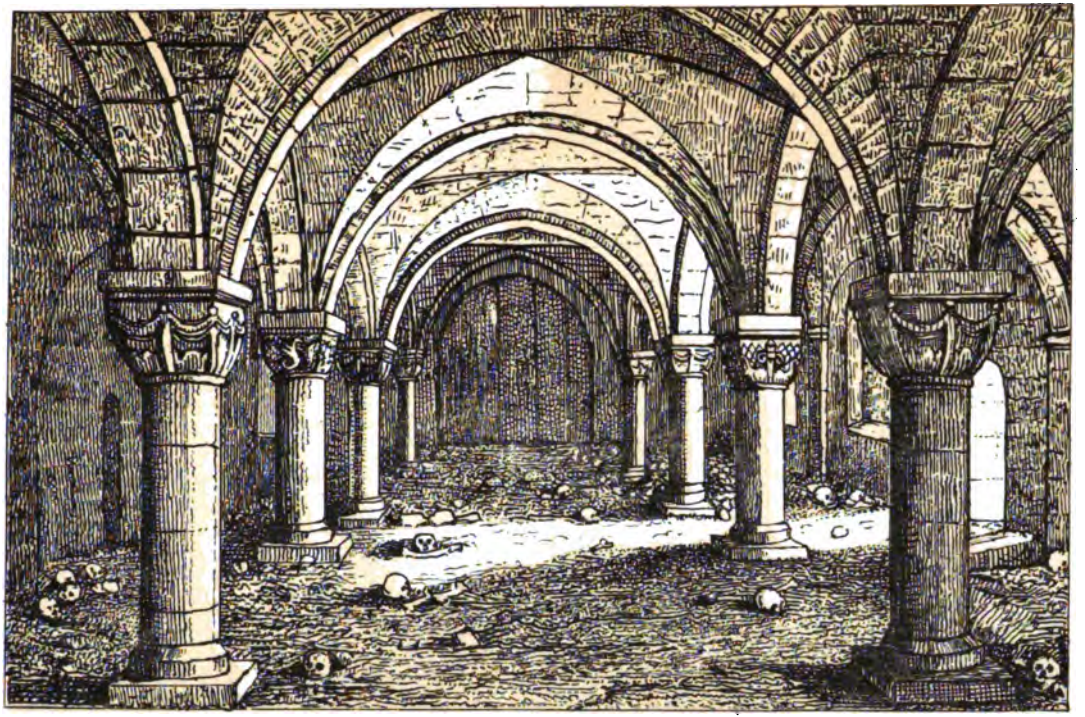

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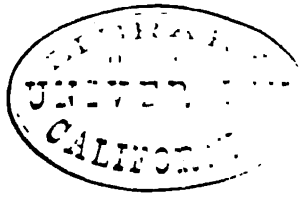

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